

chiefs listed in each particular group is fairly homogeneous within the group but not wholly so. The size of each group varies greatly in the number of chiefs identified with the group. The number of lodges "under the command of" each chief varies from six to one hundred. A note by the Spanish chronicler explains that "there may be computed about three men of arms and from seven to eight women and children" in each lodge.⁷ In the first group, twelve chiefs with three hundred and sixty-six lodges are listed. In the second group, but two chiefs with fifty-six lodges are listed.

In all the systems of military societies of the Plains Indians for which we have truly reliable data, the number of officers for any society never exceeded seven. Usually the officers were limited to four to a society. Furthermore, the warrior societies did not camp as units (excepting the Dog Soldiers of the Cheyenne). The presence of women and children in the lodges of the camp indicated by the notes accompanying the tally sheet, and the unevenness of the number of chiefs in the group, along with the variable number of lodges under the jurisdiction of the numerous chiefs, indicate that the groupings are band groupings and that the sub-chiefs with their lodges are simply the heads of the extended family units within the band (as described on page 14 above). The document in question does not supply adequate evidence of the existence of military associations among the Comanches.

Only one of the Comanche informants consulted in this study made reference to warrior societies. These White Wolf called "regiments." He was unable to give any specific information concerning their organization or functioning, however.

The tenuousness of the historical data and the paucity of material recorded by Lowie, when combined with the ignorance of present-day Comanches on the subject of military societies, all indicate that the societies were not a developed and integrated part of Comanche culture. Therefore, they could not have played an important role in social control and government.

The small groups of Crow Tassel Wearers and Big Horse men, by virtue of their being continuously at war, could not play a role in the give and take of everyday life in the community. Hence they, too, were of little direct significance in social control.

MEDICINE SOCIETIES

Evidence is found of small and limited medicine societies among the Comanches. Possessors of beaver medicine and eagle medicine of a particu-

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 295.

756 lar formula formed separate societies. Possibly there were others, but they were not discovered by us. The members of a society carried shields each painted with an identical pattern and all followed the same medicine prescription and possessed the power in common.

The membership of a society was limited—in one case to six, in another to twelve members. Perhaps it was felt that the inclusion of more persons diffused the power so as to weaken its efficiency, or perhaps the six and double-six had peculiar meaning; no society numbered more than that.

As special interest groups we must suspect that they had their ways of exerting social pressure. But in a culture which is now so much a thing of the past, the medicine societies being limited in size and apparently having no governmental import, they have left no clue as to what subversive or other means they might have evoked to satisfy their own particular personal, group, or political ambitions.

THE SMOKE LODGE OR OLD MEN'S SOCIETY

575 Old men who no longer went on the warpath had a special tipi wherein
887 they foregathered at the ending of the day to smoke and talk small talk. This was the Smoke Lodge. It was thoroughly a men's club, an old men's club; no boys or women were allowed to enter. Initiatory rites were not held for new members; when one became old and venerable enough to be satisfied with mellow, reminiscent talk, he just started going to the meetings and was free to come and go as he wished. We have no record of invitation or of rebuff to a new arrival.

When the band was stopping for only a short time at a camp site, the old men did not raise their tipi but were content with simply pressing down a circular spot in the weeds apart from the camp for their Smoke Circle.
[36] When the village was more permanently located, if the camp plan was in the crescent form, the Smoke Lodge was raised near the middle; if the tipis were laid out in a row, the Smoke Lodge was said to have been set up to the south and east of the line.

575 Though the group was informally organized, each evening's session was
887 opened with a ritual. The lodge possessed a large common pipe which was
782 in the care of its leader.^a While the lighting of the pipe was in process, there
276 was tabu on spoken words. Absolute silence prevailed. Next to the tipi door, to the right as one entered, sat the fire-tender, a captive Mexican. Opposite the door, in the usual place of a head-man, was the lodge leader with the

^a We were unable to determine how the leader obtained his pipe, whether it was a special pipe which gave with it the leadership, or whether the leader emerged in the manner of peace chiefs and supplied his personal pipe for the usage.

that there was no commonly accepted formula to which retailers of the story could hold fast. Without this unconscious prompter of memory, the truth was soon dissipated and the event is described according to individual notions. 428
183

CONTRACT

Rounding out the survey of situations of possible legal significance, attention must be given to the phenomenon of contract wherein a party or parties assumed a definite, but limited, obligation by virtue of agreement. These obligations are not to be confused with such status-obligations as sharing food with one's father-in-law. These latter may be entered upon by acts of agreement such as marriage, but once entered upon they were social and legal duties inherent in the new relations and carried on indefinitely. Standing economic obligations of a reciprocal nature are not "contractual" in nature. Contract is a specific obligation undertaken at a specific time; the contractual arrangement is ended when the obligation has been fulfilled. 675

In addition to the transfer of medicine powers and the payment of goods to settle a grievance there were other contract situations involving the rendering of personal services. Of these the most usual was curing; the next most important was the undertaking of responsibility to lead a revenge war party. A third was occult prophecy, or seer-seeing. And a fourth was sorcery for hire, or putting the enemy of another person on the spot through evil use of medicine powers. The last is not substantiated by any case material, but was attested by informants. Saddle and arrow making, if done on order, would also come under this heading.

In seeking a medicine man to perform a cure, there were certain solemn steps customarily followed. The proposal and acceptance followed an institutionalized pattern which marked the occasion ceremonially as one of significance. In the first place, it was well to use a "political lawyer" to get the thing done, especially so, if the practitioner sought was a well known medicine man. A friend of the medicine man was known throughout the band as the best person to send to the doctor. The doctor would listen to him with willing ears. The petitioner was also familiar with the ways in which the medicine man liked to have the smoke handed to him and could make the petition smooth in many ways. Such intermediaries received their compensation not from the sick person, but from the doctor, as a share in the gifts received by him. 675
756 ●

* The use of a pipe lighting assistant is of limited Shoshonean distribution. Cf. W. S. Park, *Shamanism in Western North America* (Chicago, 1938), p. 127.

675
756 The go-between went to the doctor carrying in the right hand the loaded pipe or rolled cigarette. Before speaking, the emissary lighted the tobacco and puffed a few puffs. Then he told the medicine man what was wanted. Sometimes he added what might be expected in the way of gifts. Then, if he knew the ways of the medicine man, he proffered the smoke. If not, he first asked the medicine man how he would like the pipe handed to him. The medicine man was not universally obliged to accept. But some medicines required acceptance of a commission if the emissaries did certain things. Thus with Break Something, if the emissary circled his tipi to the left before entering, he was bound to accept. But usually a medicine man, if he thought the case too much for him or was not interested, refused to accept the smoke. The acceptance of the proffered smoke bound the contract, and the medicine man set out with the emissary to visit the patient. A curing contract was for four treatments to be given in two days. If at the end of two days the patient were not completely well, continuation for another two days' cure could be arranged, or the doctor withdrew to make way for another practitioner.

Break Something told how a practicing medicine man in an impasse called in consulting specialists. Break Something's medicine enabled him to specialize in pneumonia cases. One medicine man, after two days without success, sent his wife to get Break Something. He went and found the other medicine man waiting with the cigarette. This doctor told Break Something he would like his help in this pneumonia case. He took the smoke. "When medicine men smoked together they were as one doctor." They doctored for two days; first the one medicine man, then Break Something. The patient was cured. But there was no fee-splitting. All pay went to the first doctor. All Break Something got tangibly and immediately was the smoke. However, they had an agreement after that that Break Something could call on the other doctor for assistance at any time if he needed him.

The Comanches aver that medicine men who undertook a cure got paid regardless of the outcome, providing a fee had been agreed upon. But there was at least one exception in fact. Went To See His Son was called upon to doctor a sick man. He performed his cure for two days; the patient got well; the relatives were happy, so they gave Went To See His Son a fine horse. Then the patient died. The horse was a good one and Went To See His Son was running it in races. Then a relative of the defunct patient came and said he wanted the horse back. Obviously, he said, Went To See His Son had not cured the deceased, so he had no right to the horse. But the doctor was fond of the horse and said he was going to keep it; so the relative pulled his pistol and shot the horse dead. Went To See His Son was sorry to lose

1: Hoebel E-5 (1933) 1940 NO6 Comanche NO6

HOEBEL]

LAW-WAYS OF COMANCHE INDIANS

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the horse, but he didn't do anything. Apparently he did not believe he had an established right to his horse, or we should have seen a more typical Comanche reaction to the killing. 675 756 ●

Nevertheless, when no fee had been indicated in advance, Comanche doctors were happy to receive gifts. But the true professional spirit prevailed, for it is said that if people were too poor to give gifts, it was of little concern to the medicine man. "He was glad to help out." But who knows perfection? Some medicine men hid when they thought they were going to be called upon for charity. However, if a female relative of a sick pauper asked the wife of a desired medicine man where the doctor might be, she was "custom-bound" to tell.

While women were a nuisance in this way, medicine men had another way with others of them. A doctor could dream that if a certain woman came to ask for his help, the sick person would surely get well, providing the woman did his bidding during the cure. This is reputed to have been a not uncommon practice. Some of the more unscrupulous practitioners used it as a ruse to seduce reluctant women of their fancy, we were told. But whether a woman *had* to aid, or what she received for it, could not be determined.

On the other end of the contract, what happened when the promised fee was not given after the cure had been made? The Comanche practitioners were without legal means of restitution.

A Comanche of mean disposition would in native opinion have had recourse to sorcery, "but the honorable medicine man would forget it." Persons who failed to pay explicit fees, however, were the ones the doctors dodged, while the creditor medicine man never again took a case for the defaulters. The result was a normal, but guild-manifestation, of Malinowski's principle of withdrawal of reciprocal services in reprisal for deficiency of conduct.

The sale and transfer of supernatural powers among the Comanches was a form of contract in incorporeal property rights. As between close friends and relatives the offer and acceptance was informal and direct. It was when an ambitious youth yearned to purchase power of a strong medicine man with whom he had no close kinship that more formal steps were taken. First steps were taken by the neophyte's mother. She approached the head wife of the shaman. The woman thought it over. Then she learned from her husband what gifts would be required to satisfy him. These she described in detail to the mother at a later time. Anything within reason could be asked for, for "no matter what it costs them, they are going to have that medicine." 675 756 425

675 When the proper gifts had been collected, the boy's father loaded them
• 756 upon a horse; he led it to the medicine man's lodge and tethered it a short
425 way east of the tipi. Walking about the tipi counterclockwise in ceremonial
custom, he passed through the door to be recieved by the shaman. Sitting
by the medicine man at the west side of the lodge, the father offered smoke
and stated the purpose of his visit. If the medicine man took the smoke it
was an acceptance and the deal was closed.

The "sale" of power, it should be added, was not an alienation of the
right of the original owner to use it himself. Our closest analogy is the
revelation of a trade secret, use of which requires special talent. What the
"seller" did was to prepare the neophyte in such a way that the guardian
spirit of the medicine man would provide a vision visitation in which the
power itself would be bestowed. No mortal could give supernatural power.
He could merely lend his influence to lead to a cut-in.

The purchase of medicine was only a start on the road to success for
young men. The most potent powers were never shared. Indeed, it was only
when a shaman had more than one medicine that he was willing to sell an
access to one of them. Then it was always his poorer. The presumable
motivation is that prestige rests in rarity.

The Comanches

787 experience gave an individual a feeling of significance, a "thrill" of greater or less intensity. Among the tribes east of the Rockies, the emphasis was upon the vision induced by hunger, thirst, purgatives, or self-laceration; while west of the mountains a widespread attitude regarded the vision as unsought, involuntary, a thing of predisposition.¹ The Comanches recognized both forms. They retained a Shoshonean residue (the unsought dream) and had acquired the Plains method of reaching out for power. Power might come as an unsought blessing, but that was not sufficient; hence a Comanche strived for it by courting the aid of the supernaturals in the traditional way but without self-torture.

The vision was sought on continually recurring occasions: for mourning, for warpaths, for revenge, for curing disease, for success in hunting and raiding. Men who became especially noteworthy for their success in healing, procuring desired weather conditions, or ensuring a successful chase or war party, came to be singled out as medicine men, *puhakst*. The supreme test of power was whether a revelation worked. The Indian was a pragmatist. Not everyone who claimed supernatural gifts was signally successful. Either the medicine was not strong enough, or the protégé did not carry out commands accurately, or the vision-seeker had been maliciously deceived.

• [756]

The selection of a man's medicine was the most important and sacred event in his life. Growing up with a firm belief in the all-sufficiency of personal visions, young men sought them without any prompting from their elders. From the stories of renowned contemporaries or mythical heroes they had learned that this was the way to make their mark. In later life there was usually some special reason, such as the desire for vengeance or worry over a sick child, that drove a man to seek supernatural aid. In any case the Comanche followed a well-established pattern.

The initial vision quest was made about the time of puberty, before the youth had gone on the warpath for the first time. The vision-seeker was usually prepared by a local medicine man for the desired experience. As a form or symbol of purification, the candidate was required to bathe, in a preliminary step to seeking relations with the supernatural.² It was necessary for the candidate to possess four things:

¹ Ruth Benedict, *The Concept of the Guardian Spirit in North America*, 23-26.

The Comanches

778 Practically every Comanche in more or less varying degree possessed one or more of these amulets or charms which he carried or wore. Some were obtained from medicine men; others were discovered through visions. Men very commonly wore one or more such charms tied in the hair or about the neck. Especially did a man turn to his medicine if he had a new project of great importance in view, such as setting forth on the warpath or attempting a trading or hunting expedition into enemy territory. Charms were put on very young children by their mothers for the purpose of ensuring good health and protecting them from evil influences. Crow feathers had an especial protective power for babies; tied to the cradle-board, they kept away evil spirits. Their power was negative. In fact, we never heard of the crow's giving *puha* to a man. It was tabu to use crow feathers as flight feathers on arrows. "You absolutely cannot hit anything with such arrows," said That's It. Adding his contribution, Skinny and Wrinkled, who was interpreting, declared that he always uses the bow and arrow to hunt winter game. He is a Carlyle graduate and prone to test Comanche beliefs. "I have tried using crow-feather guides," he said. "It is no good. It does something to the shooter so he can't hit nothing."

A stuffed bat on the cradle also watched protectively over the baby. "He's little, but he's really a man."

756 In Comanche society practically all males and many old women came to possess medicine, but only those who possessed at least one outstanding thaumaturgic power were recognized as medicine men or women. The greater one's power, the greater the prestige he achieved. People possessing great power usually had several lesser powers as well, and they were sought after by would-be neophytes. According to Post Oak Jim, who is himself a notable medicine man, "A *puhakat* likes to keep his favorite medicine, which he does not use often. If a young man offers smoke and asks for medicine, he will withhold his favorite and give him another."

This asking for medicine was an interesting aspect of Comanche practice and attitudes. From the Comanche point of view a good citizen should help his fellow tribesmen. Medicine was primarily to bring success in war and the hunt, activities in which the triumphs of each redounded to the benefit of all. Medicine, like a helping hand,

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should be offered to a comrade. Good health was the other great boon sustained by power. Curing and health-giving medicines should also be shared. To the Comanche this meant not only that a medicine man ought to use his power to protect, cure, and serve his fellows, but that he should also teach them how to use it themselves, if they so desired. Thus it was that a medicine man who was asked for power could not very well refuse. If he smoked the pipe that was brought to him, he was contractually bound to deliver some of his medicine. 756 ●

A famous old Comanche medicine-man warrior was Bear Claws Marks on His Shield (*masitorop*). From Post Oak Jim we have a detailed and formalized account of a transfer of his power.

“ “ “ The mother of a boy may arrange for the boy's first medicine. A boy's mother went to the wife of Bear Claws to ask for the power. This woman told her what her husband would want—the sort of horse, blankets, bridle, her husband would prefer.

No matter what it was going to cost, they were going to have that medicine.

The mother then told the boy's father what was needed. The father loaded a horse with the proper gifts and tied the horse a short distance to the east of Bear Claws' lodge. He walked around the tipi from east to south to west to north in the usual ritual pattern and then entered the door. There he offered his pipe to the medicine man and spoke of his desire.

Bear Claws prepared to perform the ceremony. He had his wife raise a new tipi on the south side of the camp. He enlisted a young brave with good arrows and another with a good spear. They stood with Bear Claws at the rear of the tipi.

The boy was standing outside the door. He circled about the tipi around the south to the north, and passing through the door, he did the same thing inside. Dressed only in his breechclout, he assumed a stooping posture, facing northward, from his position just south of the door. Bear Claws sang a bear medicine song. Then he blew across the room four times. Now he was ready to tell his arrow assistant to make his shot. He had worked up his power and sent it over to the neophyte. Using his knee to bend the bow, the archer took three

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●756 practice pulls; on the fourth he let the arrow fly at the medicine seeker. The steel pointed arrow struck the boy. The point was bent, and the arrow flew up toward the top of the tipi.

The spear man's turn was next. He ran up to the neophyte, took three practice jabs, and thrust with all his force on the fourth. The spear point was bent, but the candidate was not fazed.

During all this action, the boy was grunting like a bear. It was proven that the power of this medicine was very strong.

Next the boy gave his new shield to Bear Claws, who painted it like his own with bear claw marks—stripes of blue paint applied with fingers of the hand and running vertically. Bear Claws gave the boy his instructions: "When you are using this medicine, ride a horse with yellow skin and a black mane; look up to the clouds; you will see that when the rain falls, it does not hurt the body; bullets will be like that to you; in battle, ride across the firing line four times from left to right." » » »

Post Oak Jim did not acknowledge that he was the boy who received the power; however, we suspect he was on two counts: first, he had intimate knowledge of the reputed details of the event; and, second, he claimed invulnerability to bullets. Once in a saloon shooting, according to his story, he was hit in the mouth. The bullet knocked out a couple of teeth. "I just spit the lead out. Like that. It didn't really hurt me."

In this account no mention is made of a general principle laid down by a number of informants and substantiated by several other cases of power transfer. The medicine man did not give the power itself. He merely prepared and instructed the candidate so as to make him ready for the power. The neophyte, after instruction, had to go out in the regular way to get a vision bestowal of the actual power from the guardian spirit who controlled it.

A medicine man not infrequently preferred to share his power with a close friend or relative—brother or wife—without his seeking or wanting it. He could even be importunate about it. Breaks Something had such an experience with his own elder brother.

« « « He wanted me to have his medicine. Twice I refused

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him, because I didn't want the tabus. He could not eat beef heart or leg muscle. 756●

When I was a young man, still living with my mother and two sisters, my brother and his wife lived in another tipi. Early one morning my brother's wife called to me from outside my lodge. She said my brother wanted me in his tipi—for me to bathe in the creek and come over.

I heard my brother singing in his tipi. I bathed and went in. There I found him sitting at the west side of the lodge; he told me to sit on the north. He was painting his face. Then he started to paint my face in the same way according to the dream he had had in the night. I did not want his medicine, so I did not go through with it.

When I got married, I had a daughter. Then my brother forced his medicine on me. "You need it especially, now," he said. "If anyone gets sick in your family, you won't have to hire another medicine man. It will save you goods and trouble."

So my brother called me in again. He took a stick and bent it in a circle, making a little medicine wheel about this big [two inches]. He strung white beads and covered the wood of the wheel with them. Then he fastened two strings of beads across the middle, like spokes, with one string lying down at the bottom. He fastened this to my side medicine lock. He also gave me an eagle feather to wear.

My brother said the medicine would come to me in a vision. I would learn how to use it there. When I felt my power, I could swallow that ring.

I knew this medicine would be bad for me; it was borne out later.

When I was coming home from the hospital at Anadarko after I had cut my leg while cutting timber on Washita Creek, a Kiowa invited me in to eat. I was very weak. Another Kiowa was with me. That first Kiowa's wife got the meal while we rested.

When we sat down to eat, we had beef heart. I could not eat it. It was the same with my friend. Our host tried to call our attention away, so we would eat the meat. He joked with us.

I had a piece of bread, and I stuck it in the meat gravy twice. Right away I noticed it. Cold chills ran up and down my back. The woman came to take away the dishes; she said, "These men aren't hungry. They would not eat." The Kiowa ate no meat or gravy whatever.

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- 756 When I got home, I felt all right for three nights. On the fourth night I got a pain in my stomach. A knot formed there, so I decided to go see my brother from whom I had received that medicine.

It was about sundown when I got there. I told him I was sick. His wife removed all dishes and cooking things.⁶ Then he told me to sit at the west side of his tipi. We smoked. He got up and stood at the foot of his bed where I lay. He held eagle feathers over me and prayed; he was finding out what was wrong. When he was through, he sat down and told me I should not eat beef heart.

I said, "I haven't eaten any."

He knew better, and said the beef heart had formed a knot in there. He would cure it early the next morning. We went to sleep.

When I came out the next morning, I found they had a sweat lodge already built and a fire burning outside. We went in. My brother told me to squat on the west side, but I could not bend over; I could only lie down, facing the fire, with my head toward the sun.

Four times his wife brought in hot rocks over which he dropped water while singing. I nearly smothered in the steam. I wished I were somewhere else. My sister-in-law opened the door to let in a little air for a minute. Then three more times she brought in rocks on which my brother poured water. He sang. Finally, picking up the last red hot rock in his hand, he rubbed the knot in my stomach with it. That rock felt like ice to me.

"This rock has power," my brother said. "It will melt the knot and pain away."

When I staggered out of the sweat lodge, I could not see at first, but after I rode to the creek and lay in the water to cool, I found the knot was gone and I had no more pain. » » »

This situation reveals a nice example of psychosomatic compliance with the dictates of a dogma: violation of a medicine tabu causes illness or death. Breaks Something got ill on the magic fourth day. His cure combined thermotherapy—a sound technique for muscular-vascular relaxation—plus partial removal of the guilt through the therapeutic services of the power giver. The cure was not permanently effective, however, for the stomach pains, beginning with a numbness

⁶ This was a precaution against tabued contamination by grease or greasy things.

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in the legs, came back a month later and have recurred at intervals ever since. Breaks Something now relieves himself by lying on his stomach over a grass hummock. He thinks he will never get over the effects of eating the beef-heart gravy. It would seem to be apparent that from his not wanting the power and his conviction that it would be bad for him, he saw to it that he suffered the ill effects he predicted for himself and masochistically "revenged" himself on his brother, who forced the power on him. 156 ●

Such reluctance to assume power, or particular powers, was common among the Comanches. Powers were always accompanied by tabus; tabus were onerous restrictions on the freedom of action that the Comanche male cherished. The result was an ambivalent attitude toward the possession of medicine. Because of the onerous nature of the tabus, a man who had power could, if he wanted to be rid of it, go back to the place where he had his vision; there he thanked the guardian spirit for his blessing, saying that he no longer wished to use the medicine. Having thus returned the power to its source, he took his amulets and paraphernalia to a stream of running water for disposal. He was then free of the power and its tabus.

The sharing of power between medicine men led to the spontaneous formation of simple medicine societies of no more than twelve persons. Division of a power among a greater number so weakened its strength that it was believed to be useless. All the members of a medicine group possessed similar amulets and painted their shields alike. They made medicine in the same manner and observed the same tabus. Of course, this practice applied only to the medicine they shared in common. Individual members could also have their individual medicines.

The original procurer of the power was the society leader. Of course, he was a great medicine man. On his death, the surviving members chose a successor from among their members.

It was always proper to approach a practitioner through an intermediary when seeking a cure or a share of his power. For example, Bear Claws' wife was used. Wives were preferred for this role by many Comanche medicine men for the simple reason that their wives served in the manner of medical technicians and office assistants. (Note the role of Breaks Something's sister-in-law.) These women

The Comanches

● 756 knew the "way" of the medicine. Other medicine men preferred to be approached through a particular friend, who was usually the formal friendship partner. This overcame the handicaps connected with a wife, who in her menstrual period was barred from associating with the medicine. Some busy medicine men, like Breaks Something, preferred also to set up a medicine tipi separate from the living quarters. Like the adolescent tipi of the boy, it was always free from greasy and menstrual contamination. "My office," Breaks Something, not without a touch of humor, likes to refer to his old medicine tipi.

The acquisition of medicine power by a Comanche woman was always through the indulgence and aid of her husband, although no Comanche woman could make medicine on her own until after menopause. "It is impossible for a single woman to get power," according to the observation of *She Invites Her Relatives*. Even a married woman who had her husband's power could use it only after his death. "A brave warrior, if sensible," she proclaimed, "will show his wife how to use his medicine, so that when he dies, she can use it in his place and keep his clientele." As an afterthought she added, "He will do this only if kind and sensible." Then, after his death, the wife could go to his grave to receive his power. His guardian spirit might come and give it to her. Extremely solicitous medicine men sometimes instructed their wives and took them out to the lonely place where their power had been received. The wife could then get the power directly from the source.

She Invites Her Relatives was instructed in the medicine of her husband, but she refused to seek the sanctioning vision. "My husband wanted me to have it, but I did not want it. It had too many tabus. It might have killed me."

The procuring of the services of a medicine man has something of the nature of a contract in it. It was expected that the doctor would receive four articles in return for his efforts. He, on his part, was expected to make a gift of a part of his receipts to the intermediary through whom he was approached. And because he was an important man on whom the obligations of generosity bore heavily, other people could "horn in" on the gifts he received. "They might even ask him for his gifts before he went to make the cure. It depended upon how much nerve they had. He could not refuse them."

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Sometimes, if no cure was effected, the family of the patient withheld the promised gifts, but "an honorable medicine man would forget it." A mean medicine man could retaliate with sorcery, but in the opinion of Post Oak Jim this was quite unusual. It was felt by the Comanches that if a doctor tried his best and failed, it was still the honorable thing to give him his fee. In the case in which Been to See His Son (*patuawu'nikwai*) received a fine horse for doctoring a sick man, the patient subsequently died. Been to See His Son was riding this horse in a race one day when a disgruntled relative of the deceased patient demanded the return of the animal. Upon being refused, he pulled out a pistol and shot the horse dead. Been to See His Son did nothing.⁷ 756●

The cures effected by the Comanches included the use of pharmaceuticals, mechanical manipulation, thermotherapy, and psychosomatic therapy. Various medicine men used one or another or all of these techniques in accordance with the nature of the illness and the dictates of their guardian spirits. 755

The crude psychosomatic effect of tabu violation in the case of Breaks Something has already been described along with its cure by means of heat therapy and suggestive ritual. Two brief case histories of simple hysteria also illustrate the process.

“ “ “ Wolf medicine makes a person invulnerable to bullets. You can't kill a wolf with a gun; only with a bow and arrow.

The father of a girl named She Blushes (*ekaro'ro*) was killed in battle. She went out alone to mourn by a tree. A wolf came along and attacked her. She tried to escape up the tree, but the wolf got her and pulled her down. She cried for help, and the wolf ran away, but not before it had bitten her.

The wolf bite made her insane. When people touched her, she howled like a wolf. They sent for Not Enough to Eat (*kew'isomi*). He had wolf medicine.

He told some men to track down the wolf and bring it in to remove the medicine. They went out with guns and shot at it. Yet they could not kill it until one warrior shot it with an arrow. When they skinned the wolf, they found powder marks on the skin from

⁷ Informant: Post Oak Jim.

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The government provided the stimulus when it inaugurated in 1889 the policy of contracting with religious denominations to operate schools for Indian children on the reservation. Each contracting denomination organized one or more churches and carried on missionary work in connection with its school. The Reverend S. V. Faith of the Northern Presbyterian Church built a church south of the Washita near his school, and the Catholics operated a mission in connection with St. Patrick's School. The Dutch Reformed Church in 1890 built a mission just north of Medicine Bluff. It was in charge of the Reverend Frank Wright. The Baptist and Mennonite sects shortly afterwards entered the field. Between 1888 and 1907, Protestant denominations had fifteen stations and the Catholic one. The Mennonite Church was working exclusively among the Comanches during the time; the Baptist and the Reformed Presbyterian each had one station in Comanche territory. The Baptist with seven stations on the reservation was the most active, but by 1930 the Methodist had taken the lead.

For a long time the Comanches and the Kiowas were not interested in the missionaries. They loved their traditional life, and the medicine men played on their superstitions. Language was a barrier. The following amusing incident illustrates a problem. A missionary by the name of Gassoway was preaching to a group of Comanches in a trader's vacant store on Cache Creek. The Comanches had come out of curiosity to hear Gassoway's first sermon, and were genuinely dismayed to hear him shout and to see him shake his fist. In a few minutes they arose and solemnly filed out of the building. "He is mad at us," they said. Then Gassoway got Horace Jones to interpret for him. All went well until Gassoway began the Lord's Prayer: "Give us this day our daily bread." He got no further. When Jones repeated the words, the Comanches, thinking they were to get something to eat, stood up and shouted in glee: "Oh, ho!" Jones found it difficult to quiet them this time."⁸⁰

It is difficult to evaluate the significance of the Christian missionaries among the Comanches. The missionaries did

⁸⁰ Nye, op. cit., 341-342, from reminiscences of W. H. Quinton.

657 make the cultural transition they have been called upon to
178 accomplish. As a result of its work, many tribal superstitions
177 are being discarded for modern scientific concepts.

[757] Although hardly a Comanche would accept a white physician
[756] at the beginning of the reservation period, the Indian practitioner today is almost a forgotten man.

186 The Comanches are still confronted with many sociological
178 and psychological problems of adjustment. They have
177 not entirely disintegrated, nor have they been completely
182 assimilated. They are still Indian and want to follow the Indian pattern; their environment, experience, and teaching encourages them to discard it. They are intensely proud of being Comanche, and cherish their cultural heritage. They feel that they were unjustly robbed of their homeland, but know that they must make the best of their situation. The conflict between the old and the new often prevents the acceptance of any regular pattern of conduct and leads to confusion or unusual situations.

The matter of custom is vital to the Comanches. It is
[291] difficult to discard tradition. Some old women still wear
[302] their blankets, and a few old men continue to paint their faces and to wear their hair in plaits. The tradition of generosity does not fit well in American society for it is an impediment to economic security. Their idea of a pleasant life does not include saving, because saving had no place in their primitive society. The give-away dance has not entirely disappeared, and those who give are the losers and afterwards may seek the aid of the government.

157 There still exists a strong incentive toward the glorification
181 of the individual. This character trait was a regular
[178] feature of the old social system, where the aim of the warrior was to gain glory and where there was constant acknowledgment of his achievements. It led to an immense
[152] sensitiveness to praise and censure. The Comanches, as a result, require more praise than the white man to function, and they suffer more than the white man from censure. The
157 attitude was readily apparent in 1945. More than two hun-
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682 It was an absolute privilege-right, which not even her family would move
[593] to challenge.

682 On the other hand, for one Comanche male to kill another was never
682 a privilege-right, even when applying force to an over-stubborn defendant.
627 Any willful killing required a revenge killing of the slayer. Here was the
fatal weakness of Comanche law, as indeed of so much primitive law. The
culture provided right ways of procedure and defined the substance of
602 tortious acts. But the primacy of the kin group came to the fore whenever
682 a prosecutor felt he had pushed negotiation as far as it would carry and
627 then had taken recourse to arms. The kin of the defendant whom he had
killed did not accept the killing, although general public opinion may have
held that the victim had it coming to him. The Comanche kinsmen took
revenge on the prosecutor regardless of the rightness of his original
grievance. In enforcing the law he lost his life, a victim of *lex talionis*.

However much Comanche law fell short in this respect, custom
[518] remedied the defect in another. Blood-revenge killing was only of the first
killer and retaliation did not lead to feud. The kinship principle, while
extant, was nevertheless weak among the Comanches, and general fighting
within the tribe was not to be countenanced when there were always out-
side-enemies to be confronted. The killer, and the killer alone, had to die.
There it stopped. No religious sanction, no tribal authority, was necessary
to suppress the feuding tendency. Custom was sufficient restraint, and in
this the Comanches were fortunate, for thereby they escaped the self-
renewing curse that plagues so many primitive law systems.

Willful killing of a man's favorite horse was an act akin to murder,
685 especially if the horse had been bequeathed to him by a best friend. Re-
627 taliation was taken not in killing the favorite horse of the transgressor but
[825] in slaying the transgressor himself. A favorite horse had a legal personality
and was equated with a human being. Consequently, no further blood
revenge followed, for things were already equal: a man for a horse.

Every Comanche male at one time or another went on a vision quest
707 in search of power. He did not abase himself before the supernatural spirits
or masochistically mutilate and torture himself to arouse their compassion.
716 Nor did he weep before them to arouse their pity. Unlike the tribesmen
707 of the Plains to the north, he assumed that the spirits were generally benign
toward him; they needed no coaxing to share the benefits of their power
with him. If he fasted and waited in a lonely place, they would help him.
716 Nor did they interfere in his daily living except as they put conditions on
the use of the power they gave him. A Comanche had to observe no super-
704 natural tabus save those that went with his own personal medicine. Under
Postulate VIII, most Comanche medicine men used their powers to help
756 the people. They cured and used their medicine to bring success in war
704 and the hunt. They even, for a contractual consideration, helped others

A [See category 181, p. 69--Analyst]

to get a share in their power. Although they were paid for their healing efforts, they did not attempt to milk the public or use their supernatural potency for exploitative purposes. Comanche magic was mostly white.

Occasional older medicine men, however, became "mean medicine men." Unable any longer to maintain their prestige by war prowess, they struck out at enterprising youngsters. They shot their medicine into them. The detection of sorcery was the job of a curing medicine man. In the first instance, after diagnosing the nature of the illness and who caused it, he always tried to effect a cure with a counter medicine. If he was successful, nothing more was done. If he failed, legal action was in order. The brothers of the sorcerized victim would call upon the sorcerer to remove the curse. If he refused, which he usually did by denying that he had anything to do with the affair, they could move to an attack with weapons or the threat of such an attack. But whether they did or not depended upon their strength of character. In sorcery cases where the aggrieved party was a weakling (and apparently not backed by brothers) there was no prosecution; and one Comanche, Salt Worn Out, even shifted to another band, to get out of the sorcerer's sphere of influence.⁷ In one instance where the aggrieved brothers started an apparently forceful prosecution, they backed down when the sorcerer put up an even more forceful defense—a threat of more sorcery.⁸ In the event both parties took equally strong positions, one accused sorcerer took a voluntary conditional curse on the sun—and was killed by lightning the following spring. Thus he paid the price of his guilt.⁹

In another instance the alleged sorcerer was forthwith stabbed and killed by his own sister's son, the brother of his victim. The slayer's elder brother was appalled by the act. But Chew Up, the knife wielder, retorted, "Is it as nothing that I should sit and watch my brother being murdered? Should I have done nothing?" And here there was no blood revenge in counteraction, "Because" in the very words of a Comanche, "the quarrel was in the family, no one else could take it up or do anything about it."¹⁰ Homicide was not legally a tribal or public affair. [682]

The cases in general indicate that the Comanches preferred not to tangle with sorcerers. A cure by a good doctor was much to be preferred. This failing, a kinsman did not have to prosecute as did a cuckolded husband, but he legitimately could, if he had the guts. Otherwise the individual act of sorcery went unpunished. Brave warriors as champions at law did not enter these cases. A warrior outfacing another warrior was one thing, but to have to threaten a sorcerer was not an inviting prospect for even the bravest.

⁷ Hoebe1, *Political Organization and Lawways*, case 23, p. 92.

⁸ *Ibid.*, case 24, p. 91.

⁹ *Ibid.*, case 23, pp. 89-90.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, case 27, pp. 94-95.

/page 39 continued/

C consider here how the attitudes toward peyote itself have changed.
K The meeting as I have seen it conforms in most details to the descrip-
745 tions given by Mooney, LaBarre, and Slotkin, allowing of course for
177 regional variations. On the other hand there seems to be a marked
C change in the effects of peyote. Less importance is attached to the
K vision and there is hardly any evidence of people passing out, etc.
[178]

Many of the older peyotists also had power of the older sort
C and even John Pahdoponi and Bill Saupitty have been healers apart
K from their peyote functions. I have asked concerning the fate of the
781 old forms of power working on the supposition that if it were real
177 it would not have dissappeared into thin air in the minds of the
[178] present day peyotists. It seems that power came to an individual
through the intervention of the supernatural being in those specific
situations we may call quests. Due to the coming of the White culture,
the proper conditions for the quest were destroyed, i.e., sanctified
C areas, silence, natural surroundings. The Wichita Mountains were
K the traditional areas for receiving power. The bands did not camp
823 in the mountains, nor did they travel through them on their way to
778 raid or war. This holy ground was open for small day light excursions
[178] (berry picking, etc.) and for inter-tribal travel along the "peace
trail". Other than these activities the area was respected as holy
C and used only for the search for power. In spite of the changes
K since the White inroads, many of the mountains are considered haunted
823 and ghosts still abound in popular Comanche and Kiowa parlance. The
778 older Indians do not travel far into the mountains and do not camp out
[178] there. Dreams are still a great topic of interest in spite of the
C fact that they cannot confer power. One is liable to dream more
K often and more vividly while in the mountains. The dream is still
781 able to impart a message if the dreamer is able to interpret it.

C Peyote, in the early days, also had power. This because of
K its manifest healing properties and because of the visions one could
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• FOREWORD

121 doctor. Ethnographic materials and popular materials on the colorful Comanche raiders are available, but very little has been previously recorded on the institution of the Comanche traditional doctor.

123 Jones was able to obtain his excellent data as the adopted son of Sanapia. As he explains, this close association had disadvantages as well as advantages. It was assumed, for example, that as Sanapia's son, the author would automatically know many of the obvious aspects of the doctor's role. Furthermore, the role of "Young Son" carried with it a series of complex, reciprocal role relations.

128 The reader is given intimate details concerning Sanapia's training, which was lengthy and complex. After the final rituals involved in receiving the Power necessary for an Eagle doctor, Sanapia had to be passed on separately by four different instructors.

One unique chapter is devoted to the detailed preparation of herbal medicines and methods of administering them. The illnesses treated ranged from heart pain, pneumonia, and paralysis to exzema and loss of appetite.

158 Since Sanapia spent a great deal of time treating "ghost-sickness," the author explains the meaning of the concept and describes the symptoms and treatment. Jones analyzes the psychogenic roots of this disease, considered by the Comanche to be peculiar to the "Indian." The author believes the malady may be viewed as a conversion reaction related to unmanageable psychic stresses.

756 The author attributes Sanapia's success as an Eagle doctor to the fact that she was able to adapt quickly to the changes taking place in Comanche culture.

153 This process of adaptation was simplified for Sanapia as her own home environment had required that she adjust to three disparate religious systems—the Christianity of her father, the Peyotism of her uncle and paternal grandfather, and the Plains Indian pattern of vision quests and guardian spirit represented by her mother, the Eagle doctor.

000 Upon completing the reading of the detailed study of Sanapia's training and role behaviors, the reader feels that he knows Sanapia more intimately than do her own peers.

GEORGE and LOUISE SPINDLER
General Editors

Portola Valley, Calif.

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Sanapia, 1895-1968

Early Childhood

SANAPIA WAS BORN at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, in the spring of 1895 in a tepee 115
encampment of *yapai* Comanches who had traveled to Fort Sill for rations 159
from the vicinity of Medicine Park, Oklahoma. As with most Comanche
women her age, Sanapia only knows that she was born in the spring and has
therefore arbitrarily set her birth date at May twentieth.

Her father was Comanche and her mother Comanche-Arapaho. Sanapia
was the sixth in a family of eleven siblings, having five older brothers, three
younger brothers, and two younger sisters. As is still the custom among the more
traditionally oriented Comanches, the maternal grandmother is very instrumental
in rearing her daughter's children. Both Sanapia's mother and her mother's older
brother were eagle doctors.

Yeah, my mother doctored . . . she could do anything. One time it was her
playmate . . . one time they were playing and she died. They put her buckskin
dress on her, and you know in them days when anybody died they put red paint
all over their face and their arms and their feet and then they put them away. They
fix her up like that. My mother was playing with the rest of the kids. She was
just a little bitty girl. She said, "I'm going to my tent and go to sleep. After
awhile I play some more." Later these kids came to her and said, "They want
you over there. Go to doctor." And she was just about ten years old that time.
She went down there and she said, "No, no, she not going to go. I don't want
her to die. I'll fix her up." She told all those people that, "You all get out. I'll
fix her up." And she was sitting in that tent making all kinds of racket and
pretty soon that little girl get up. She came back to life and lived many years.
My mother died before her.

Sanapia's maternal uncle was also very active among Comanche peyotists,
leading peyote meetings throughout southern Oklahoma. Sanapia also counts among
her relatives a paternal grandfather who was an important *yapai* leader in the

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people like now. I remember that when I was small I watched long bunch of white peoples come in here and up to today that's almost all there is around here. In them days, no fences and no white people. And my grandmother knew that before it happened. She know lot of things like that too. And when what she says happens I was sure surprised, but it made me believe her better. She had a big hunk out of her ear. She cut her ear up when her brother died in the war . . . to show how sorry she was, but I didn't know that and I would joke her and tell her, "What's the matter with your ear? Did a mule bite it off?" She would tell me what happened to it. I would ask her all sorts of things and she would always tell me something on it. She's the one who told me to take my mother's doctoring-way when I was getting older. I didn't want it because I thought it was silly or nasty, but my grandmother said that soon in the future there wouldn't be hardly any Indian doctors left and she sure was right on that. I really cried when she pass on, because she had been so good to me, bringing me along like she did. So now, up to today, my daughters got kids and my son. I try to be like my grandma. I tell them old ways that I can remember, but, you know, they don't hardly care for it. They getting to be more like white peoples every year that pass. My grandmother told me all this would happen too.

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Sanapia's maternal uncle, an eagle doctor like her mother, was very active among peyotists in southern Oklahoma. Her first recollections of peyote meetings were those which were directed by her uncle, and it was through him that Sanapia later learned the manifold uses of peyote as a medicine. Her mother also utilized peyote as a medicine, though not to the extent to which her uncle employed it. Sanapia's paternal grandfather was also a "strong peyote man." Thus early in life Sanapia was impressed with the importance of peyote by two very influential family members.

Religious Influences

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Sanapia was reared in an atmosphere colored by three basic approaches to supernaturalistic realms—the Christianity of her father, the peyotism of her uncle and paternal grandfather, and the more customary Plains pattern of vision quests and guardian spirits as embodied by her mother, the eagle doctor. Through this liberal education she learned the basic tenets of each and managed to syncretically combine elements of all three into the validating and supportive unity by which she now lives and finds the rationalization for her own supernatural prerogative as a Medicine woman.

She quite naturally deemphasizes the differences and emphasizes the similarities in these three supernaturalistic systems. She is very fond of making comments like the following:

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You know, the bible says that when Jesus was on earth he would heal people. His disciples had that same power as Him, and I know I'm just like them. I got power in my hands to heal peoples too. You can read the bible to find out that Jesus gives those people power to help people that got sickness, and it's just like that with me. When I pray, I feel just like, well, the Lord says, "You go heal that person. I give you power to do that and give you a good mind . . . put power in your hands. When you touch anybody like that, you'll get them well." That's what I always thought, you know. Use the bible like that.

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115 They teach us the men. We all sitting around there. When she tell us how
159 Jesus was born, we just laugh and act silly and our matron would say, "Don't
177 laugh." Then we ask her, "Did you see the baby?" You know, things like that
197 ... the older girls and us ask her questions like that. We just laugh about it.
222 All the time we thought it was silly for them not to go and see the baby when
[212] it was born. Yeah, we learn how to write and learn how to spell, and arithmetic
and whatever they learn us. We caught onto it. Then the government wrote a
letter to our superintendent and said to send a bunch of them to Haskell in
Kansas. And they sent a bunch of them over there and they went to school up
there for about three years and they come back and they were grown and they
all got married, but I didn't go. My mother wouldn't sign the papers and my
dad wouldn't let me go. "No, we don't want her to go up there. She might run
off or she'll freeze to death or somebody might kill her on the road." So a
bunch of us girls, we didn't go. And a bunch of them went. My brothers went.
They were younger than I and they went. And my mother said, "No, she's not
going, but you boys could go. Boys are tougher than the girls." That what she
told my brothers and so they went. I didn't care nothing about it either way.

During the summer vacations she would return to her home, which at that
time was situated along Chandler Creek in Comanche County, Oklahoma.

115 I never did go places because we didn't have no places to go in them days ...
159 no cars or nothing. When we come out of school we just stay home all summer.
241 Help my father with the work and everything he's got. He had lots of crops. My
brothers cultivate that corn. I have to ride the horse for them and keep it on
the row because the corn was so high that the horse would keep eating back
and forth and my father would make me ride that horse to keep him on that
line so he won't be eating the tops of the corn. They take turns, three of my
brothers, while I be riding that horse all day, all day. In the morning we go plow
till noon and then we go to dinner and then we go back and plow again till
we get through with it. My father used to teach us to work, you know.

115 It was during summer vacation prior to her last year at school that Sanapia's
159 mother offered to train her to become a doctor. Sanapia was reticent at first, but
593 combined pressure from her mother and maternal grandmother persuaded her to
756 at least consent to the first phases of this training program, that of learning to
868 identify in their natural habitat the various floral medicines which her mother
824 used in doctoring.

The Middle Years

115 Sanapia left school when she was fourteen years old, and her activities
159 for the next three years were in the main involved with the training program her
756 mother and uncle had established to teach Sanapia all she would need to know to
868 become an eagle doctor. By her seventeenth year Sanapia had successfully com-
[871] pleted her training and possessed all the skills, knowledge, and supernatural powers
[582] which she would employ in doctoring after she passed menopause. During the
period of training her mother had dissuaded her from marriage so that she would

31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 NO6 Comanche NO6
Oklahoma

THE MIDDLE YEARS • 25

be able to give her full attention to learning the skills of the eagle doctor. Much of this dissuasive effort was also aimed at Sanapia's older brother since it was the brother who had the prerogative of giving his sister away in marriage. However, after her training both the mother and the older brother immediately joined in a combined effort to find Sanapia a good husband.

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Sanapia, age 16 (left) and her young sister (right). Taken in Lawton, Oklahoma, 1912.

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Well, my brother was chumming around with this young boy. He was about nineteen and he went to Fort Sill School. And my brother, he go down there and come home with him sometimes. Finally, that summer when school was out, he brought that young man home with him and he stayed with us all summer. My mother said, "You better get married to this boy. He's a nice boy. He always helping with everything, and he might work for us if you get married to him." I didn't have no sense enough to . . . I mean I don't think about love, or anything like that. So I said, "If he wants to marry me, I marry him." So my mother said, "Do you want to marry my daughter?" and he said, "Yeah, I'll marry her." And that's the way I got married. They just give their kids away like that. If you ask anybody, "Do you want to marry my daughter?" They say, "Yeah." That's your husband . . . just like that.

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Sanapia had one son, and shortly after his birth she left her first husband at the urging of her mother. She married again within a year and remained married to her second husband until his death in the early 1930s. She had a son and a daughter by her second husband. Following the death of her second husband, Sanapia's life took on a tone which is recalled most vividly by those who wish to discredit her. During this time her violent bursts of temper, excessive drinking, sexual promiscuity, and zest for gambling won for her a notoriety which has never entirely left her. She talks of those years as "the time I was roughing it out."

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Sanapia's second husband was apparently her favorite. He is also the only one of her spouses which she refers to as "husband." She was emotionally very ravaged by his death. It is interesting that the more tradition-oriented informants will mention Sanapia's misbehavior after his death but add no note of blame, simply emphasizing her grief. Kardiner (1945:77) makes the following statement, when discussing a Comanche woman's behavior after the death of her child. Perhaps the reaction to the death of a loved husband could correspond to the same pattern.

After the death of a child a young woman who had previously been entirely respectable would become exceedingly active sexually and would have a whole series of affairs. This behavior, which sometimes lasted two or three years, was recognized as a sort of psychotic state and did not result in the same sort of difficulties that accompanied elopement or break-up of a marriage. The husband would feel sorry and would wait until she recovered and then resume the regular marriage relationship.

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It was during the years when Sanapia was "roughing it out" that she first attempted to employ her doctoring skills. She was approached by a sister who wished Sanapia to doctor her sick child.

She came to visit me one day when I was around here. She rolled a smoke with that Bull Durham and handed it to me, and I took it. I didn't even think what she was here for, but then I knew. She ask me to doctor her sick baby. I got so nervous I just start to shake all over and I told her to go away because I was feeling shame, I guess. Then I start to think what my mother told me, how I couldn't refuse nobody, so I went with her. I kept thinking that I couldn't do no good, but you know, I got that baby well. I thought that was some kind of sign, so I thought that I might try to make something out of this doctoring.

TRAINING TO BECOME A DOCTOR • 27

Some years later Sanapia married again, and many of my informants say that it was at this time that Sanapia abruptly ceased the behavior which had caused her so much notoriety. This was also the period during which Sanapia earnestly began her career as a doctor. Every account of cases which Sanapia treated stems from a time no later than 1945. 115 159 756

Sanapia and her present spouse have traveled extensively in the western United States. Their route always corresponds to areas of Indian population density. In the following, Sanapia recounts her first excursion to Wyoming. 115 159 484

We went to New Mexico and to Las Vegas. We went over there. We just went, you know. We don't know where we going but we just went that way. Came to Navajos, Pueblos, and we visit among them and we stop at Las Vegas. Mind you, at that time I sure like to gamble. And so I went over there and start gambling. J—— [Sanapia's husband] said, "You better quit. We long way from home." And I just said, "As long as we stay here I'm going to gamble. If we lose anything, I win it back." Wanted him to get me some money. And so we stayed about ten days and then we went on. We went to Wyoming. They, the Shoshones, live in a reservation at Fort Washington, north from Lander, . . . town of that name, I think. Maybe something else. They live close together to one another, you know, not like us. We live so many miles from each other. They don't work, they don't do nothing. Just all day long they drum and sing and dance and every day something is going on and gambling is the biggest part of it. Well, when we first got over to Wyoming, that afternoon, we ask where are the Shoshone peoples. We was right there among them and we didn't even know it. We went into a big building, you know . . . it was their community building or something like a club or something like that. We went in. It was full of Indians. They was sitting around in groups around the floor. And there was blankets and they was sitting on it. And then we stand there and look at them and they was gambling . . . playing Mexican monte. And so I wanted to find out what my grandmother had told me so I went up and listen and when they talk about us. We didn't talk. We just be standing there. And they said "These are some kind of Indians, maybe Mexicans. They sure look like Mexicans." They said that. And we said, "We not Mexicans." . . . in Indian. And they look at one another and said, "Do you all talk like us?" and we said, "Yeah, we talk like you all." I said, "We your ancestors. That where we come from." So that evening they invite us to their homes . . . this whole group of people and that night we have group of Indians there. They were all talking to us . . . finding out where we live and where we come from and all that. And I told them, "You are the people that my grandmother told me about." And I told them about that big sickness what the Indians caught, and then I said, "You all got that and then you scattered. You belong to our tribe. That's what my grandmother told me." And they were surprised, you know.

Training to Become a Doctor

Sanapia recalls the four years of training to become a doctor as the most important years of her life. It is to those years that Sanapia owes the prestige which she enjoys today among the northern Comanches. As a doctor, she holds a status in her society equal to a man. She is at the zenith of traditionally defined prestige and social power acquirable by a woman in Comanche society. 115 159 756 557

The first phase of Sanapia's training began in the summer before her last 115 159 756

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115 year of school. This first phase consisted of lessons in identifying certain medicine
159 plants in the field and in the avenues of acquisition of medicines which were not
756 native to southern Oklahoma. Sanapia was also taught the rituals involved in the
824 collection of certain plants and the various manners of rendering raw plant parts into
278 manipulatable medicine. Concomitantly, she was instructed in the skills of admin-
istering medicines.

The first phase initiated Sanapia's training period and continued through-
out the next three years. Sanapia was next instructed in the diagnosing of all manner
of human afflictions and their proper treatment. During this time she served as
an aid to her mother and maternal uncle in their doctoring activities and thus
was able to observe the actual treatment of patients as well as the required deport-
ment of a doctor and his patient. However, knowledge of ethics and required
role behavior of a doctor was not left to Sanapia's youthful observations alone.
She remembers "long, long talks" when her mother and uncle would impress on
her the proper behavior of a doctor.

115 These rules of conduct, in the way in which they deemphasize the signifi-
159 cance of the individual and emphasize the supernatural powers operating through
756 him, seem to have a distinctly Judao-Christian cast to them and appear to be some-
177 what counter to the more individual-oriented supernaturalistic notions recorded
for the Comanches of an earlier time. Perhaps Sanapia, in her attempt to construct
a unified religious structure from the three disparate supernaturalistic systems
into which she was born, has slightly modified the tenor of the eagle doctor ethics
and their premises, as taught by her mother and maternal uncle, to make them
more compatible with other elements in her own personal syncretic supernatural-
istic complex. It is highly doubtful that her mother, with her aversion to Christian-
ity, would have so sensitively and systematically performed this feat.

Deportment of a Doctor

115 Most importantly, the doctor must lead a good and honorable life. The
159 Medicine demands this, and it would do harm to the individual possessing
756 it if he acted in a manner unbecoming a *pubakut*. Sanapia suggests that a *pubakut*
[76] and his Medicine are one. If a possessor of power, through his untoward behavior,
brings disgrace on himself, he also brings disgrace on his Medicine, and as punish-
ment his power could cause his death.

The doctor must also be always accessible. He cannot refuse anyone his
services. Sanapia conceptualizes herself, in the role of eagle doctor, as the medium
through which the Medicine operates. She "possesses" Medicine only in this sense,
and, once she has committed herself to the life of a *pubakut*, it is no longer her
decision as to who may or may not benefit from a supernatural power acting
through her which can alleviate human suffering.

An eagle doctor must never extol his own abilities and should also dissuade
others from doing so. Once again, Sanapia interprets this as a further means by
which the doctor recognizes that it is not the doctor but the Medicine with which
he has been gifted, which is responsible for the good works which are accomplished
by him.

ORIGIN OF EAGLE DOCTORS • 29

A doctor should never suggest that he could cure an individual but must wait for the individual to approach him. Again Sanapia states that a violation of this norm would be an indication on the part of the doctor that he, and only secondarily his Medicine, is the important element in the potential curing. 115 159 756

A doctor must be paid for any services he renders, no matter how slight. Similarly, a doctor cannot work his Medicine without payment. In the case of an eagle doctor, this applies even to family members. In addition, the payment, with the exception of certain relatively inexpensive ritual items (green cloth and tobacco) required at the first interview of doctor and patient, must be left to the discretion of the patient. A doctor cannot refuse anything which is offered in payment. Furthermore, Sanapia was instructed that she must immediately give away a portion of her final payment to anyone in her immediate vicinity at the time of payment. This "give away" is a means by which Sanapia honors her Medicine. [431] 115 159 756 465

And one thing, when they come to me . . . anybody comes to me and say, "I want you to doctor me," bring plain goods, no figure or nothing. Dark green goods. They have to take that and smoke and they going to give me that green goods. Either a yard or two or three or four yards like that. That's the only thing I ask for. And they say, "Now what else we going to pay you when you get this boy, this girl, this woman, this man well?" I say, "That's what I call for . . . just the green goods. And if he gets well or she gets well, its up to you. If you think I get that person well, its up to you." But I'm not going to say I want this and that and that and I want so much money. I'm not going to say that because that's what my mother told me. She said, "Don't you ever ask for anything. Its going to be given to you. I don't care what anybody says, its going to come to you." Now, up to today, when anybody give to me . . . give me blanket or any kind of goods . . . I ain't supposed to keep it. It be like somebody come here and I doctor them and they get well and they come in and pile things up here for me and those girls are out there. I call them and say, "Here, you all. Take you choice out of this." And whatever they leave, that's mine. And that's the way I get all my things today and that was my mother's words . . . what she told me to do.

Origin of Eagle Doctors

It was also during this period of training that Sanapia was told the origin story of the Comanche eagle doctors.

Way back in years there used to be an old woman who was pretty poor. She had a grandson she tried her best to take care of because all her children were gone and all that was left was this grandson. When them people moved their camps, she used to trail behind them. When they set up another camp, the old woman would camp right outside on the edge of that camp place. Sometimes people, mens, brought them food, meat, you know. But most times they were poor and hungry. And it went on and went on till one time they were all down south and west among them Navajo and Pueblo peoples. They was all trading each other. Meat and blankets for corn and meal and things. One Comanche young man got a whole pile of that corn meal and brought it to the old woman. That's the only way they could get that stuff them days. The grandson was happy over that, you know, over that young man bringing those things and helping 756 773

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756 273 them out. Well, later on the grandmother was cooking that corn and her grandson wanted some. The woman said, "No, I can't get any right this minute. I'm too busy to mess with you." Her grandson asked again but he got that same answer. He ask four times until he just fell over backwards and started crying and hollering real loud. Then he told his grandmother that he was going to be an eagle and leave her. Sure enough, he started growing wings on his shoulders. The grandmother thought he was joking, but soon and soon he had wings. When the old woman saw that she start to cry but the boy said, "No, you been stingy and I'm going to go . . . going to leave you all." The grandmother was crying and beggin' him not to go and soon a bunch of people came around her tepee. She ran out and told them what was happening but they didn't do nothing. I guess they thought she was crazy. But then, all at once, the boy came out and flapped his eagle wings and flew up and up. He went over them four times. He told them, "I'm leaving because that old woman was stingy with me." Then he took a feather from his tail and dropped it and it came down real slow, this way and that way, back and forth and back and forth. Then he said, "I'm going to leave you people this thing. Whoever gets that feather when it lands will have my help when ever he or she needs it to help some other people." And don't you know, the first person to get that feather was just a little girl. She was the first one what had that eagle's power like he said.

Consent of the Teachers

115 159 During the four years of her training Sanapia was closely observed by four individuals—her mother, maternal uncle, maternal grandmother, and paternal grandfather. Each had to give approval, by means of a blessing ceremony, before 756 875 Sanapia's mother could complete the last phase of the training, the actual transmission of her supernatural powers. Sanapia's mother could usurp the prerogative of the other three mentors; however, this would be considered a serious breach of etiquette and proper procedure. It would also tend to make Sanapia suspect as a witch since it would be known, by broadcast of the three slighted mentors, that there was no way to know for certain that Sanapia had truly learned to use her powers in the proper manner. Ideally, each of the four individuals would act as Sanapia's adviser and teacher; though it would be the mother and maternal uncle, in Sanapia's case, who would be solely responsible for instruction in the skills of doctoring, while the maternal grandmother and paternal grandfather would dwell upon instilling in her a proper system of values, morals, and ethics.

115 159 The notion that supernatural power is potentially dangerous for group welfare will appear repeatedly in the following discussion. This belief seems to be the basis for the four-man "review board" in Sanapia's training. A *pubakut* can do great good for his people, but he is also capable of tremendous evil. By 756 875 a series of checks by the four advisers, the potential of evil tendencies in a training Medicine possessor can be more readily detected. If the one who will do the actual transmission of power overrides the other three mentors, at least the community can be warned of this; that is, the new *pubakut*, because of his lack of ethical training, may use his powers for evil.

115 159 Sanapia's maternal grandmother was the first one to bless her, thus giving her approval to Sanapia's becoming a doctor. The paternal grandfather's blessing 756 603

CONSENT OF THE TEACHERS • 31

ceremony was similar, in its essentials, to the following description given by
Sanapia of the blessing by her grandmother: 115
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One morning she told my mother, "This morning I'm going to bless my granddaughter. I want to fix it. I want my son to go out there and build a fire and when it turns to coals he could bring me some." And she had a little iron bucket, you know, and she said, "Put that big coal in this iron and bring it into my tepee. I want to bless her so she could live a long time and help people. And then she going to have children. And whatever she wants, anything at all, she's going to get it . . . easy way . . . she won't have to work, she won't have to do nothing." That's what she said, and then she blessed me. I was pretty good size, about fourteen I guess. She blessed me with all what she said and then she put cedar on them coals and she pray and sing. Then she put her hand on my head and I inhale that cedar and she fan it on my legs and arms, all over my body. She would sing a song and then she prayed some more. And you know, in them days I never did know how they prayed, but she would pray and she said, "You, I don't know what you are, but I want you to bless this little girl so she can grow up and live to be an old lady like me. You, the one who go in the night and watch people, I don't know who you are, but you're like that, bless her. And this earth, I want her to walk on you for many, many years. I want her to be strong and healthy and I want her to live many years." And after she got through, she took that red paint and put water in it and rubbed it like that. Just smeared it all on my face, and rubbed it from my knees down to the bottom of my feet. Then she said, "Now, she's going to stand on this earth. This paint comes from the earth and she's going to stand on it. And she's going to live long life after she gets old. Help peoples. And when she gets real old, and her hair turns gray and white and her teeth fall out, well, that's when she's going to die." That's what she told me.

In the early 1900s a flu epidemic struck the Comanches. Sanapia was afflicted, and her maternal uncle was summoned to treat her. It was during this treatment that the uncle gave his consent by including phrasing in his standard blessing ceremony at the termination of treatment which meant that Sanapia would regain her health only if she would devote her life to the profession of doctoring. Frightened by this bit of "blackmail," Sanapia promised that she would always strive to be a good woman and a good doctor. As a symbol of her promise, the uncle gave her a new name, "Memory Woman," signifying that Sanapia should never forget the oath made to her uncle as a condition for her regained health. 115
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The next to give consent was the grandfather, but the final and most crucial consent needed was that of the mother. It was given early in the last year of training. With the mother's blessing-consent, the actual transfer of power began. This transference of supernatural power from the mother would progress through four stages, culminating in Sanapia's four days and nights of solitary meditation. The four-day ordeal, or vision quest, signals the termination of training, for it is at this time that the neophyte eagle doctor's power is tested during the period of solitary meditation as the ghosts converge on him in an attempt to frighten and harass him to the point that he will renounce his Medicine. In other words, even with the consent of the teacher and the three advisers, the actual fait accompli is ultimately the outcome of a kind of mystical combat between the 115
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115 malevolent spirits of the dead and the Medicine of the potential eagle doctor.
159 Kardiner's (1945:93) observation that, among the Comanche, "Medicine" is
756 merely a euphemism for "courage" is pertinent, for the ghost's major weapon
775 against the neophyte doctor is fear. It is interesting that although the behavior
[171] engaged in during these four days and nights of solitude is similar to the general
pattern of Plains vision questing, Sanapia conceives of this time as merely a
final test and not a time when a supernatural patron could have possibly appeared
to her and granted her certain supernatural prerogatives. The apparition of her
patron, the eagle, would come later in her career as a doctor. In the beginning of
[825] her doctoring career, the powers which she possessed came strictly from a personal
[787] power transmission from her mother and uncle to her. Sanapia feels that visita-
[778] tions from either the eagle, or at times from the spirits of her mother and uncle,
are gifts granted her as a reward for her faith and conscientious endeavors as
a doctor.

Power Transmission

115 The first stage in the actual power transmission from the mother was
concerned with instilling power into Sanapia's mouth and hands, the areas of
159 the body where an eagle doctor's powers are most strongly represented. The rituals
756 involved with this first phase of transmission are very similar to the blessing
[824] ceremony, at least in the introductory stages. Sanapia's brother was told by the
mother to lay a fire of pecan wood. After the wood burned to coals, the brother
[823] brought the coals to a secluded place where Sanapia and her mother waited. The
mother sat facing east, and Sanapia was instructed to sit facing her, while the
mound of coals burned between them. Sanapia was cedared¹ and fanned by her
[533] mother with the standard blessings of long life and good health. This blessing
also included the mother's singing of her Medicine song, an action which serves
to call the *pubakus*'s power sources to his service. The mother, using her bare
115 hand, then plucked a live coal from the mound of embers and handed it to Sanapia.
159 At first, Sanapia reports, she balked at placing the burning coal in her hand, but at
756 her mother's insistence she took it and was amazed that it did not burn her. She
787 was then instructed to rub the coal over her hands. Once again the similarity in
the concepts of "Medicine" and "courage" appear. Today, Sanapia interprets the
handling of live coals as an act of faith in the doctor, a necessary first step in
testing the potential doctor's resolve.

I was sure scared then . . . almost got up and ran away. I was only a young
girl at that time, you know. But, when I took them coals on my hand, inside and
outside my hand I felt a chill, maybe. Oh, it was like chills in my hands. That
has the meaning that power was in there . . . working in my hands. Felt like
it would go up my arm even.

¹ The dried leaves of the red cedar are sprinkled on live coals, and the rising smoke is
wafted over the person who is being blessed.

POWER TRANSMISSION • 33

After Sanapia had taken the coal and covered her hands with the ashes, her mother began the transmission of supernatural power to Sanapia's mouth. Two eagle feathers, manipulated by the mother, were drawn across Sanapia's opened mouth four times; however, in the course of the fourth movement of the feathers, one of the feathers disappeared. At this occurrence Sanapia's mother told her that the eagle feather had entered her mouth and would dwell there for the rest of her life. 115 159 756 789

As with a similar phenomenon occurring in a variety of witchcraft which will be discussed in Chapter 5, Sanapia states that she does not believe that an eagle feather actually was inserted into her mouth but rather that the idea, the essence, or the Medicine which the eagle feather symbolized, was the entity which was placed in her mouth. She does not attempt to explain the disappearance of the second feather from her mother's hand except to suggest that her mother possessed certain powers which she did not transmit to Sanapia. This first phase was ended with the mother's application of red paint to Sanapia's face, forearms, and legs, from the knees to, and including, the soles of the feet.

Two tabus, or "rules" as Sanapia calls them, were attached by the mother to the powers transmitted in this first phase of the actual transmission. Sanapia was forbidden to eat any kind of fowl. Her mother warned that if she broke that rule, the feather in her throat would kill her. The second tabu forbade Sanapia to allow people to pass behind her carrying food, especially meat, while she is eating. 115 159 756 784 784 262 264

That eagle, when he eats, he don't like anybody to be behind him. When its sitting on the ground, and it see anybody behind him, it twist all around and sit toward you. If he back there eating meat, he don't want any meat behind him. If some kid carry meat on a plate, it just give me chills all at once . . . you know, if they be behind me. I don't care if I don't see it, if there's meat on that plate behind me I get chills, and I know someone back there. My mother said, "If you keep it like that and try to take care of yourself, it won't make you loose your ways about it. That's going to be the rule I give you. You got to do that. Don't let anybody go behind you when you eat, especially if they carrying meat."

It is impossible to say if certain kinds of power or specific supernatural abilities to achieve a certain exclusive end were transmitted at each of the four stages of transmission. From Sanapia's discussion it can be said that each stage marked an increase in the degree of power generally. Before the beginning of the actual power transmission Sanapia was taught the ritual procedure which she would require as a doctor. The four stages of transmission acted to instill in her ever-increasing powers to successfully actualize the goals of these doctoring procedures. 115 159 756

An analogy can be made with the construction of an automobile. Before it is actually energized, it is equipped with everything that it will require to efficiently operate. Then, at the source of manufacture, it is carefully observed while given several rigidly controlled and graded performance tests. Supernatural power, like an untested automobile, is potentially dangerous to the operator. This appears to

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115 be the rationale for the transmission of power in stages, each stage being inter-
159 rupted by a certain length of time in which the effects of the preceding stage on
756 the recipient can be observed. Sanapia was not entirely sure how a negative reaction to a transmission of supernatural power would manifest itself. She suggested death or insanity as two possibilities.

For the several months following the first stage of transmission, Sanapia was closely observed by her mother and her maternal uncle, who at this time entered into Sanapia's training program, instructing her in the many medicinal uses of peyote. If any ill effects from the first transmission had occurred in Sanapia, her mother would have immediately terminated Sanapia's program and acted to remove the power which she had given her up to that point. Sanapia's total immersion in running water would have been a core theme of such a desacralizing ritual. Since no negative reactions appeared in Sanapia, her mother initiated the second stage of transmission.

All the power transmission ceremonies are generally similar in that they are based on the blessing ceremony of the eagle doctor, which employs cedar, eagle feathers, Medicine song, and red paint. The unique feature of the second transmission was the mother's magical insertion of an "eagle egg" into Sanapia's stomach. An increase in eagle traits indicates an increase in eagle power. To [789] Sanapia the logical pivot of the egg insertion in this second stage of transmission [825] is clear: "Female eagles have eggs inside them." As with the case of the eagle feather in the first transmission ceremony, Sanapia feels that it was the essence or the idea of the egg which entered her. Similarly, she cannot explain how the egg disappeared from her mother's hand prior to the egg's insertion in her stomach.

Tabus

115 The tabu connected with this second power increase forbids Sanapia to
159 eat eggs. It can be seen that each stage of power increase is signaled by the neophyte
756 eagle doctor's acquisition of symbolic elements which are to a great degree intertwined with the nature of the accompanying tabus. As the power increases, the
784 potential dangers to the *pubakus* increase as his behavior is more tightly bound by
262 tabus, the breaking of which would lead to personal disaster. From Sanapia's accounts, the *pubakus*, at least of her time, possessed a way to escape the tabu burdens of their powers if they wished. As Sanapia grew older, she began to acquire a craving for eggs. In order to satisfy this hunger, without risking the dangers of breaking her "rule," she commissioned an eagle doctor to extract the egg from her, and thus dismiss the tabu against the consumption of eggs. Of course, by having this done she also lost the quantity of supernatural power which accompanies the eagle egg. It is interesting to note that though the tabu was removed, Sanapia is now physically unable to eat eggs.

Up to today, I just can't eat eggs. When I eat it I feel like it just set there and it won't go in. I don't know why. I thought I would be able to eat eggs. When I was small my mother won't let me eat eggs because I already had one and she don't want me to eat eggs. But after she pass away and I start eating

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eggs, but it always feel like I'm choking in here and I just quit eating them. And now I can't get the taste out of my mouth. I'll have it all day long. I just can't eat them. 115
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Sanapia's maternal uncle gave her but one "rule." She was forbidden to eat the visceral organs of animals. This was a bitter pill for Sanapia because of her love for liver and an Indian delicacy made from stuffed intestines. She has managed to circumvent this tabu by reinterpreting it. Sanapia feels that if she changes these forbidden meats into something else, disguises them, she can eat them with no fear or guilt.

A *pubakus* cannot doctor himself in the manner which was described regarding the removal of the eagle egg. This is unfortunate for Sanapia, for as she grows older, the tabus which she must observe become increasingly cumbersome; and since she is the only living eagle doctor, she has no way in which to relieve herself of these restrictions. This is also a reason for her disinclination to associate with the less traditionally based members of the Comanche tribe. The more conservative and traditional Comanches recognizing the special limitations which are placed on Sanapia's behavior and, honoring them, make her life a little less complicated. With the less traditionally oriented, Sanapia cannot be sure that they understand the meaning of her tabus, and thus she must be constantly on guard around them lest they pass behind her while she is eating, for example, and unknowingly, or perhaps knowingly, cause her to break one of the many restrictions placed on her with regards to food and behavior. Sanapia states that ignorance is no excuse when a "rule" is broken. Her tabus are mechanical. 115
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The unique feature in the third power transmission was Sanapia's acquisition of her Medicine song. The Medicine song is Sanapia's most direct means of communication to the supernatural realms which are the ultimate sources of her power. The song belonged to both the mother and the uncle. Sanapia considers her Medicine song extremely potent and utilizes it only under the most critical and pressing of doctoring situations. It is not a common element in her doctoring activities but is only employed when she feels that all her other tactics are failing. The song is her ultimate doctoring tool in that it is as close as she comes to actually commanding her power sources to heed her wishes. [778] 115
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The immediate result of her Medicine song is the summoning of the spirits of her mother and uncle. She then asks them for support in her attempts to reach more deeply into the supernaturalistic realms for more power and control over the situation which is challenging her. 115
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When my mother gave me that song she told me, "When you come by yourself like that, when you don't have no place to go for help, when you got no one to lean on for help, sing this song. What you want, you going to get. I'll be listening to you. When you sing this song, I'm going to hear you singing and I'm going to help you."

Two tabus concerned with behavior were associated with the power increase of this third stage. Sanapia was forbidden to ever directly make a request of another. Her powers would, according to her mother, allow her to obtain anything 115
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195 she desired simply by wishing for it. Sanapia evades the strictures of this
115 tabu by circumlocutions when her daily routine dictates that she must ask an
156 individual for some object or assistance.
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The second "rule" which she acquired at this stage required that she must
115 always be alone when she doctors. Once again, Sanapia views this as a recognition
156 of the potential dangers which excessive supernatural powers possess for humans.
756 The only individuals who could possibly be with her while she doctors are other
756 eagle doctors or persons who Sanapia feels have Medicine which would protect
778 them against the dangers of supernatural contamination.

756 Kardiner (1945:64) makes a comment relevant at this point when writ-
775 ing on the subject of Comanche notions of power and magic.
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[769] Another interesting point in connection with power, probably unique with
the Comanches, is that power might be obtained from the ghosts of medicine
men. This was obtained through sleeping by the grave of the medicine man,
not moving all night, no matter what terrifying thing happened. The ghost
would then transfer the power asked for. Sometimes the sleeper would have
a vision; in this the ghost did not come in human form but as a great wind
and then a giant bird, which conveyed to him the power that he wanted.

Sanapia's discussion of the later stages of her training agrees with Kard-
115 iner's statement in general; however, some major divergences appear. Sanapia,
159 through her Medicine song, is able to summon the spirits of her mother and
756 uncle to her aid. She does not consider their appearance as the apparition of
775 ghosts, however. To Sanapia, ghosts are totally evil entities. Ghosts are also unable
778 to appear in human form since, in her opinion, their human forms decomposed at
the place of their interment. Her mother and uncle appear to her looking exactly
as they did during the time of her training. When they appear, they do not
speak but rather employ hand signs to tell Sanapia that they have come to her aid.

[769] She does not mention a Medicine man's grave as the location of the inevi-
[825] table struggle with the ghosts, and she definitely does not feel that power is trans-
mitted to her from ghosts. She does agree generally with Kardiner's mention of
a "giant bird" as one of her power sources, though she does not believe that the
Medicine bird is actually a ghost in another form.

115 In reiteration, Sanapia states that she received her initial powers through
159 her mother and maternal uncle, and only later in her life was she honored with
756 visitations by the eagle, her patron and guardian spirit. The four days and nights
775 of seclusion and meditation, in her opinion, are in actuality a final test of a new
[825] doctor's ability to withstand the attacks of ghosts, and not a time when he is
in a position to acquire further powers from a supernatural patron.

Final Test

115 Sanapia failed her final test. After her mother had explained to her what
159 she could expect during her four-day ordeal, Sanapia was too frightened to go
756 through with the vigil. She would spend the daylight hours sitting on the hill
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FINAL TEST • 37

to which her mother had sent her, and at dusk she would creep back to her house and pass the night under the front porch. In the morning she would go back to the hill before the household had awakened. Her mother and uncle never knew about this deception. However, Sanapia believes that the great amount of sickness and misfortune experienced as a young woman can be attributed to her cowardly conduct during this last phase of her training. 115
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Before, you have to go and fast four days, before they give you that Medicine. Maybe take a little water. You suppose to go up there on that hill and sleep up there by yourself. You suppose to pray and cry and talk. My mother say, "Somebody will come to you way in the night . . . in the middle of the night. They going to push you and kick you and they do things like that, but don't get scared. They going to kick you around and slap you. They fighting you for your Medicine." That's what they told me. But me, I was afraid to sleep up there in them mountains by myself. I didn't want to go out. I go up there and come back. Nobody come to me . . . or nothing.

Before appearing at her home on the morning of the fifth day, Sanapia bathed in a running stream as a device to erase any vestiges of supernatural residue which could be harmful to those who would greet her on her return. The mother met Sanapia as she approached the house and blessed her with the standard cedar-ing, fanning, and application of red paint. It was also during this blessing that the mother first addressed her daughter as *pubakut*. 115
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Close friends of Sanapia's family had gathered at the house to congratulate Sanapia and to present her with gifts. The host family in turn gave gifts to those who came to honor Sanapia. Moccasins, blankets, shawls, groceries, money, dishes, yard goods, and horses were the items which were exchanged as gifts. 115
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Within a few days after Sanapia returned from her four-day fasting, her family sponsored a peyote meeting. The main function of this particular meeting was to gather a large group of Comanches for the purpose of formally announcing Sanapia's newly acquired status. Also, it was thought that the prayers which would be offered for her during the meeting would aid her to more easily bear the burdens which her power imposed. The morning after the meeting was festive, consisting of more gift giving and feasting. However, at the same time that the beginning of Sanapia's new career was being celebrated, her mother's doctoring career had ended. The mother, though retaining all her powers, would cease to function as a doctor. Her withdrawal, however, was voluntary. If she had so desired, she could have continued her doctoring activities. This type of behavior would have been considered improper on the part of the mother, even though Sanapia would not be able to doctor until many years in the future, after menopause. Sanapia, basing her actions on those of her mother, will also cease doctoring once she has transmitted her skills and powers to her successor. In the nomadic Comanche culture, power could be transmitted from donor to recipient with no loss on the part of the donor. This is the case with the transmission of power from the mother to Sanapia. 115
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In Sanapia's accounts of her mother's temper during the time of transmission of power, it would seem that the mother, who had reached a very advanced

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115 age, was tired of her profession and its rigors. She felt, perhaps, that she could
159 excuse her inactivity in doctoring to the fact that her daughter possessed her
756 powers. In other words, the mother's behavior could possibly have been based
778 on circumstance, though Sanapia now interprets it as a law to be observed in
transmission of power from a donor to a recipient. Sanapia is also in agreement
that this type of rule does not make good sense. However, she explains that she
does not understand many things which she does in her capacity as doctor. It is
enough for Sanapia that her mother and uncle told her to keep the Medicine way,
so she attempts to keep it, even if she does not understand certain aspects of the
115 role she inherited. A practical aspect of what Sanapia considers one of the more
159 senseless of her rules of behavior concerns the method she must follow in choosing
756 a successor. As a woman, her first choice of successor would be her favorite
[388] daughter. However, at this point if she gave her Medicine to her daughter and
then ceased doctoring herself, as she feels she must, it would be approximately
twenty years before the Comanches would again have an eagle doctor in their
midst, that is, until after the daughter passes menopause. During this time the
115 special prerogatives of her Medicine way could probably be taken over by peyotism,
159 as she has seen occur among the neighboring Kiowa. It is significant that she
756 does consider herself in competition with peyote doctors.
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Those Kiowa got this old man that doctors with peyote but he don't get
people with twisted-face well. . . sometimes he don't get anybody well. That's
what I heard. I even got some of those peoples that go to him. . . they come
to me later on and I fix them up. Peyote is good but some things can't get
well with it. I can do things that they can't do because I got that power. People
learn that and then I see them. . . come to me. Us Comanches got two brothers
that doctor with peyote too. That's all they use. There's a young man down at
Walters but nobody pay him any attention. He just says he got power but I want
to know where he got it from. Nobody knows that so. . . well, he's just a
young man.

Dreams and Visions

115 Shortly after Sanapia began her doctoring career, she had her first "real
159 dream." She distinguishes between ordinary dreams, which she considers generally
756 unimportant, and real dreams, to which she attributes enough importance that
787 she will be motivated to certain kinds of behavior by them. The first dream
[828] experience occurred after she appealed to the eagle, while doctoring, to supply
her with a special Medicine feather.

This man, something like a man, came to where I was sleeping way in the
night. He stood there and then held his hand to me. I just watch him, you
know. I wasn't scared or nothing. Then he move his arm toward north and
all at once I saw his arm go away from him. And next morning I said, "You
all know what, I'm sure lonesome to see my uncle. He's up north around
Geary. Let's go see him, if you all want to." Here we pack up and beat it down

DREAMS AND VISIONS • 39

there north. And we was coming. We visit him about four days or five days. I said, "Uncle, we going home now." He said, "Why?" and I told him, "Just feel I get home and get my check." Then he went back and opened up his suitcase and said, "Come here," and I went. He had about twelve eagle feathers and he told me to take one I want best. I pulled out the best one in the bunch, and he said, "That's for you. Take it with you." And so that feather, what I dream about was given to me by my uncle. That's what that dream, really good dream, carried with it. 115
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A recurring real dream comes to Sanapia which, in its essentials, is similar to the one just mentioned. The man appears to her at night and extends his hand to her. In the palm of his hand is a peyote button which covers the entire area of his palm, even fusing with his hand. He instructs Sanapia to take it from him. Her first several efforts are futile, for as she reaches for the peyote, it disappears. Finally, she is successful in taking the peyote from the man's hand. As soon as she grasps it in both hands, the peyote enters her hands and spreads a chill or tingling sensation through her hands and arms. Sanapia equates the tingling sensation with supernatural power. 115
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Sanapia is not consistent in statements concerning her opinion of the identity of the man in her real dreams. At times she identifies him as the spirit of her maternal uncle, at times as "something that's helping," and at other times as the "peyote man." The identity of the man seems of little concern to her. The significant part of the dream to her is her magical acquisition of the peyote's power.

During peyote meetings she has had several experiences which she considers similar to her real dreams. The central theme of all these peyote experiences is the same: The peyote tells Sanapia that through its power she can accomplish anything she desires. The following account is typical. It also contains, once again, the peyote-hand motif. The gigantic size she attains relative to those around her is another recurring element in these peyote experiences.

And you know, that night, oh, I ate so much of that peyote, and I just feel good. Then, when I look, all the people sitting around in the tepee like that, everybody was way down right under my feet, and I was above them. I was sitting on top of them. That's how the peyote affect me in my body. And I said, "I wonder why they sitting down there and me sitting up here?" And I look this way and my boy was sitting here and I said, "Look at these peoples sitting down there and I'm sitting up here. Here's your head right here and you're sitting way down there too. I wonder why?" He said, "Mama, you eat too much of that peyote." And you know, I close my eyes and when I look at my hand, I had a big peyote there, as big as my hand. It was just sitting there, I said, "Look son, look what I got. Look at this peyote." He said, "Mama, I don't see anything there." But everytime I look, there it is. It was great peyote with green and with real pretty designs on it. And somehow it said, "Go ahead, use this and you could just do anything you want with it. You could just doctor anybody you want and they going to be alright. Right now you could doctor that one." But he didn't name anybody out. Come into my mind like that. "Right now you could just go out there and do as you please with this peyote. You infected with it so strong you could just raise a sick-bed man or woman or child. You could raise a dead man." It just came into my mind like that.

Visitations from the Medicine Eagle

115 Sanapia has had only two visitations from her supernatural eagle patron
159 in her doctoring career. Both occurred during doctoring situations as a direct
756 result of the singing of her Medicine song. Sanapia reports that her Medicine
825 eagle looks like eagles she has seen in the wild except that it is much larger. She
787 can feel her eagle's presence before she sees it. On the first occasion she felt a
[533] rush of air from its wings, and on the second it was a tingling sensation which
announced the presence of the Medicine eagle. Sanapia states that when the
eagle came to her, everything around her disappeared with the resultant image:
an eagle against a murky gray background. These visitations were very brief.
During the eagle's apparition, it appeared to be hovering directly in front of
her at a distance of about 4 or 5 feet. While the eagle was present, Sanapia
trembled violently and perspired freely. She states that her heart beat very rapidly
and she felt as if she was going to faint.

Contacts with the Supernatural

115 Sanapia has provided herself with several contacts with the supernatural
159 worlds. Since she cannot visit the other worlds, Sanapia must depend on these
756 contacts to assist her in making her wishes known to the supernatural realms.
787 Her comments concerning her Medicine song clearly identify the spirits of her
[715] mother and maternal uncle as her two major assistants. It should also be remem-
bered that she considers her Medicine song as her most potent piece of doctoring
paraphernalia. The spirit-man in her recurring real dreams is also a liaison or
avenue of rapport between Sanapia and the supernatural, though in this case it
is strictly a one-way phenomenon which is beyond Sanapia's control.

115 Sanapia's eagle comes to her only through the intercession of her mother
159 and uncle via Sanapia's Medicine song. She associates her lack of courage in the
756 final phase of her doctor training with her inability to call the eagle to her aid
787 independently of her mother's and uncle's intercession. This is also the reason
533 why Sanapia possesses only one Medicine song instead of the many which her
775 mother and uncle possessed. In the final analysis, Sanapia can rarely act inde-
pendently as a doctor; she must call on the assistance of her teachers. Therefore,
instead of having many songs for summoning power, she has one. She must first
call on her mother and uncle and then relate to them her wishes, which they,
through their superior powers, actualize. Basically, then, Sanapia's real power
is the control which she can exert over the powerful spirits of two *pubakutsi*.
However, this type of analysis is foreign to Sanapia. She prefers to think of herself
as the pitiable supplicant.

115 Peyote is another important liaison with supernatural powers. The power
159 she receives from peyote is the only power which she can manipulate entirely
756 independently of the spirits of her mother and uncle. Still, the power of peyote
787 is subordinate to the powers possessed by the spirits of her mother and uncle,
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and in her most difficult doctoring situations and in all her most critical moments, it is to the spirits of her teachers that she turns for aid.

The Supernatural Universe

Sanapia's description of the supernatural universe is full of contradictory elements. This is not as great an obstacle to action as it may seem since she addresses each element individually as the situation demands. She has no need to attempt to grasp the entirety of this universe at once. Sanapia is able to select from her potpourri of supernaturalistic notions the ones which best suit a particular occasion.

She believes that living human beings share the earth with the ghosts, or malevolent spirits of deceased humans who, alive, led evil lives. The ghosts can enter into the world of men, but men cannot enter the world of ghosts except through death. Also, somewhere, neither in the plane of living man nor in the plane of ghost existence, is the realm of pure, unembodied supernatural power. Such entities as the sun, the earth, and the eagle are able to tap this power and thus possess it to a greater extent than can mortal men. Power can be acquired by men only through secondhand channels and never from its source. A mortal would be killed if exposed to pure power. The power, from its original source, is inexhaustible.

In yet another plane of existence are found the spirits of good men such as the disciples of Jesus and the spirits of Sanapia's mother and uncle. This realm is not quite like heaven, which is the abode of God and Jesus and the eternal home of those ordinary souls who have nothing to offer the world of the living, as do the spirits of Medicine men or the disciples of Jesus. Hell is somewhere deep in the earth. Sanapia believes that it is the special eternal home of evil white men. Her notions of the nature of hell follow the standard Christian concept.

Peyote is similar to the sun or the eagle in its ability to embody an extraordinary degree of supernatural power. However, unlike the sun or the eagle, peyote comes from the Christian God as a sign of his love for all Indian people. According to Sanapia, the sun has existed longer than the Christian God, and is therefore entirely self-sufficient.

Thus Sanapia can become more or less Christian, peyotist, or Plains shaman as varying situations present themselves. By not assigning a negative value to contradictory elements in her supernaturalistic universe and by oversimplifying the similarities, Sanapia possesses a flexibility which confounds any attempt to present a very cogent description of her "religion." If a key pervasive theme had to be chosen, it probably would be concerned with the idea of supernatural power and the desirability of its acquisition and control.

A Successor

At the present time Sanapia is beginning to consider the problem of a successor, for she feels that her doctoring career is rapidly approaching its final

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115 hours. There does not seem to be a very rigid or fixed system for the selection
159 of a successor. A Medicine woman should transmit her powers to a favorite
756 daughter, and a Medicine man, to an eldest son. However, if the first choice does
593 not respond or does not demonstrate the required personal qualities, he is eliminated.

Sanapia's daughter has shown little interest in acquiring her mother's powers. Sanapia feels that this is because her daughter is "too much like a white man." Sanapia's youngest son has already tried and failed in his attempt to acquire his mother's power because Sanapia did not believe in his sincerity. Thus, he is permanently eliminated. Sanapia's next choice was her daughter's adolescent son, though Sanapia fears that the mother's influence will eventually rule him out as a potential successor.

During the final stages of my research with Sanapia, a new potential successor presented himself—Sanapia's eldest son. She had not even considered him in her search for a successor because of his aversion for all those things which are associated with traditionalist Comanche society. Recently, however, in his late forties, he has begun to take a greater interest in peyotism, for example, and in acquiring from his mother a more thorough command of the Comanche language. He also embodies all those personal traits which Sanapia feels a doctor should possess.

You know that oldest boy of mine down at Lawton? He sure is a good one. He never say anything out of the way about anybody. He's just so happy right now. And everytime I go down there, I see somebody at his house. He takes them in to help them along some. He gives them his last dollar. He sure likes to help people out. And he treats me real good too. Everybody seem to like him. I talk to him about my doctoring ways and he said that he would think about it and tell me later on sometime.

115 Sanapia can transmit her knowledge of medicines or actually dispense
159 medicines to anyone for a fee; however, the transmission of power, since it is
756 received as a gift, must be given as a gift. Once again, this follows from Sanapia's
778 feeling that power cannot actually be owned by an individual. A person may acquire the knowledge required to manipulate power to a certain degree; however, this is the only sense in which he actually owns it. When a *pubakus* dies, the power he "possesses" does not die with him but once again becomes a free, unattached, and available agent to the next man or woman who has the ability to control or manipulate it. To Sanapia, man is subordinate to supernatural power. It would be illogical to her to conceive of a weaker agent controlling a stronger agent. Power can temporarily enter a mortal and become one with him, but it is still in the position of ultimate control. She cites the many tabus which a *pubakus* must observe, and mentions that there are no restrictions placed on the power.

She will state that power increases through time. A further probing of this notion reveals that what she means is that a *pubakus*, through time and experience, can become more efficient in manipulating power. Sanapia conceives of supernatural power as a static phenomenon. Once it is established, it does not decrease or increase of its own accord.

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The tabus which are attached to supernatural power are a major reason that a doctor may experience difficulty in his attempt to find a successor. Wallace and Hoebel (1952:165) mention this in their discussion of Comanche supernaturalism: 756
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Such reluctance to assume power, or particular powers, was common among the Comanches. Powers were always accompanied by tabus; tabus were onerous restrictions on the freedom of action that a Comanche male cherished. The result was an ambivalent attitude toward the possession of Medicine.

Sanapia, being aware of this, is planning to delete certain tabus from her Medicine way in order to make the acquisition of her powers more palatable to a twentieth-century Comanche. Of course, the absence of certain tabus also indicates the absence of the concomitant degree of power. Her successor will not be burdened with the food and eating tabus which Sanapia finds so cumbersome. He will also not have to be bothered with the tabu forbidding the making of direct requests. These deletions are major concessions for Sanapia, but ones which she feels are necessary if her tradition is to continue. 178
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Sanapia's mother modified her Medicine way before transmitting it to Sanapia for much the same reasons that Sanapia is now being compelled to consider. An element which occurred in her mother's modifications, though not in Sanapia's, was the deletion of certain powers because of their lack of contemporary function. Her mother possessed many medicines and songs which were associated with the role of midwife. She told Sanapia that the delivering of infants would be taken over by white doctors in the future and, therefore, there was no reason for Sanapia to learn the skill or to be compelled to observe the tabus associated with it. To both Sanapia and her mother the primary function of an eagle doctor is his ability to cure ghost sickness³. The deletions in tabus and power made by Sanapia and her mother have not infringed on this specific power. 115
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Sanapia believes that her doctoring tradition will ultimately die as the Comanches become more acculturated. She states that *pubakus* will cease to exist when the Comanches have no more need for them. Sanapia's sensitivity, concern with function, and general pragmatic instincts make her a very sensitive barometer of the manner in which culture change is viewed and handled by a traditionally oriented Comanche. Since her opinion of herself is bound by supernatural sanctions, and not merely by elusive value structure, her reaction to culture change is much more dramatic. 115
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Attitudes about Sanapia

The ways in which Comanches of both northern and southern affiliation and members of neighboring tribes react to Sanapia as a personality are many and 115
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³ "Ghost sickness," "twisted face," and "crooked mouth" are names which the Comanches, as well as other southern Plains tribes, give to a condition of facial hemiplegia, usually with concomitantly occurring constrictions of the hands and arms, which is said to result from ghost contact. [164]

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115 varied. Because of her supernatural powers and mercurial temperament, a certain
159 aloofness marks her relationship even with her friends. Only two old women,
157 women who grew up with Sanapia, seem to be able to overcome this barrier.
571 This aloofness is as much instigated by Sanapia as it is a reaction of others
based on fear, or at least uneasiness in her presence.

Some Comanches exhibit a type of reaction to Sanapia which is interpreted by other Comanches as jealousy. Sanapia has a position and a skill which is denied to the majority of Comanches. Many of the younger and more acculturated though sympathetic Comanches consider her a likeable but eccentric old woman. She is considered ridiculous by many of the southern Comanches. Many Comanches, as well as neighboring Kiowas and Apaches, continue to represent her as sexually promiscuous, alcoholic, violent, and prone to excessive gambling. However, in all these cases her traditionalism and conservative Comanche beliefs are acknowledged, though they may be interpreted positively or negatively, depending on who is presenting the opinion.

A Kiowa woman offered the following opinion:

She sure is a good old woman . . . pretty for an old woman too. I seen you with her bunch a lot so I guess you know what she is . . . what she does. I took my niece up to her once and she cared for her and got her well in a few days. I tell other people about how she took care of my little girl and they might go to see her if they get sick bad or if their family might get sick.

Another informant was less charitable in his evaluation:

I don't know much about it. I've heard some of my people talking about an old woman who lives south from here. They say she can curse you if she wants to and make you sick. It's that woman you mention too. She supposed to be a bad one, but I never seen her. I don't believe that stuff about curses myself but a lot of people . . . Indian people . . . do. You better watch out. They say she can do it.

Sanapia's Self-Concept

115 Sanapia is aware that some people laugh at her, and she does as much
as she can to eliminate this possibility, for she is an exceedingly proud woman.
159 Types of behavior which ostentatiously identify her as a *pubakut*, such as wear-
156 ing a black kerchief or vocally demanding that others observe her tabu restrictions,
are avoided by her for fear that others will think that she is "just a crazy old Indian."

Sanapia's opinion of herself remains quite high in spite of the pressures that surround her. In the following account she describes how she brought a dead
115 niece back to life:
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756 I was doctoring my niece one time . . . the doctor gave up on her. She had
755 cancer and liver. So the doctor, white doctor, gave up. They dismissed her from the Indian hospital and she went home. Somebody came to our house that after-

SANAPIA'S SELF-CONCEPT • 45

noon and told us that L—— was dying. The doctor gave up. I told my husband, "Let's go see her." And we beat it down there and it was about five o'clock, late that afternoon. It was cold. When we got there she was just lying on her back like that . . . nobody was in the house except her. Her husband was gone and her children were all gone. She was white as a sheet. Her face was just white and her lips were blue. She didn't even notice me come in. I wake her up and said, "Are you sleeping? What's the matter with you?" She said, "I'm dying . . . going to die tonight. That's what the doctor told me. They dismissed me from the hospital. I'm going to die either tonight or tomorrow . . . just any day. Could you help me?" That's what she said. And I told J——, "You go get your brothers. I'll get her out of it . . . that's nothing. That cancer ain't nothing to me." And he beat it down there to his brothers and they come in right after dark. That night we soaked that deer hide . . . soaked it in water till it could get soft and they put it on the drum. And right there in the middle of town . . . she got a home in the middle of town and a lot of white people living all around her house. So I said, "Let's have this peyote meeting for her tonight . . . drum all night. Let me fix her up. She be alright." And so that night we had a drumming right there in the middle of town. And she was worse the next morning. I said, "This is too noisy. I don't like to doctor anybody in noisy place. Let's take her home." So we load her up and brought her down here to our place. That night we had another peyote meeting inside of the house and it was just pouring down rain and we had the meeting for her. Took that peyote and said, "Our fathers, way back in years . . . our grandfathers took this medicine, and they said that whenever anybody sick like that you just take this and chew it and then put it in your hands and let her swallow it . . . give her four at the start." And I done that. I prayed and I talked to that peyote just like I'm talking to you. I said, "If you don't get her well, I don't want you. If you not nothing, if you ain't got power, I don't want to use you anymore." God made me in this world and he gave me this power just like when he was here on land. Jesus went around blessing people and healing the sick and everything like that and I believe that I got the power in my hands. I believe I could get her well. So that night we had a peyote meeting and the second night we had another one and the fourth night . . . the fourth night she died. She just went out. She was blue . . . fingernails were blue and her lips turn blue. I told them, "Take that drum hide out." And they took it, rinse it out, squeeze it, and I said, "Give it to me." And I put it on her head. I rub her face with it, and four times I done that to her and then I sing my Medicine song. When anybodies dying and I doctor them that's the only time I sing that special song I got. So I said, "You all carry her and put her on my bed," and they carried her. I said, "You all stay out there in the front room." And they all stayed out there and it was still pouring rain. Everybody get out. It was raining out there and the wind was howling around. I sing this song and I fan her and I doctor her . . . give her that medicine. I don't know how many times I give her that. And after awhile she open her eyes and said, "I'm sure thirsty." And after that she got alright.

Sanapia considers herself a slightly outmoded necessity in Comanche society. She knows that she represents an extremely ancient Comanche institution, and it is in that knowledge that her feeling of uniqueness rests; at the same time she can foresee the final end of her tradition. Many times, as we sat watching automobiles moving along a highway or observed the skyscrapers in Oklahoma City and Wichita, she would speak of the incongruity of herself and the twentieth-century world in which she lives.

3

Medicine Kit

Care of Medicines

SANAPIA KEEPS the various kinds of botanical and nonbotanical medicines which she utilizes in a leather "travel case." This case is kept on a shelf on the west wall of her bedroom. She will also only open her medicine kit on the west end of a room or tent. The medicines in the travel case are kept orderly and fully stocked at all times to facilitate speed in an emergency call on her services. Each medicine is wrapped in a piece of cloth. The cloth is black in almost every instance, though Sanapia states that this is only coincidence. In the inside lid of the case she keeps her Medicine feather—a tail feather of a golden eagle.

Sanapia is the only one allowed to touch this box or its contents, and she will not open it in the presence of small children or menstruating women. The medicine kit is potentially very dangerous if handled in an incorrect manner by the wrong person. Sanapia recalls what happened to the niece of an eagle doctor who died several years ago.

When S—— died, a niece got into her medicine bag. Now don't you know she sure shouldn't done that. But it got her . . . she got that twisted face and nobody fix her . . . couldn't do a thing for her. If she had sense, she would take that bag, don't open it mind you, and throw it in the creek. Then it couldn't hurt nobody.

Running water, because of its desecralizing effect, is Sanapia's only remedy by which the possible harm produced by an individual's inadvertent contamination by supernatural power or Medicine belonging to another can be undone. In a doctoring situation if it is absolutely necessary that another person touch some object connected with her medicine kit, this person must immediately be cedared, or "smoked," upon completion of the task; that is, the dried and rubbed leaves of the red cedar are sprinkled on live coals and the rising smoke is drawn over the contaminated person in a ritual cleansing act. After the cedar ritual

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- 756 someone must pour a ladle of water over each of his hands four times. The one
278 who pours the water over the hands of the one contaminated and who aids in
783 the cedarizing may be any person present except, of course, a small child or a
menstruating woman.

Sanapia forbids children near her medicines because she feels that such
756 close proximity could make a child sick, cause him bad luck, or possibly kill
278 him. She is not quite sure why the medicine could hurt a child, but she is sure
783 about another aspect of the danger which her medicines present to children. Her
858 special and unique power is ghost Medicine. She feels that ghosts therefore hate
756 her and are constantly attempting to harm her and those close to her. This means
278 that they are very likely near her most of the time, especially when she is work-
783 ing her Medicine against them or the results of their activity. Though they cannot
858 harm her or adults who have courage to resist them, they can harm children, who
775 are naturally weaker than adults in courage and Medicine.

With respect to her aversion to the presence of menstruating women while
756 she is doctoring or when her medicines are open, she can offer no specific rationale
278 except that these were the instructions she received from her mother. The only
783 possible explanation which she felt she could offer is that loss of blood means
841 weakness, and weakness makes an individual more susceptible to illness caused
by supernatural or natural means.

Wallace and Hoebel (1952:158) write that among the Comanche all
756 medicine had to be protected against contamination by grease as well as the pres-
278 ence of menstruating women. It is interesting that Sanapia is not concerned about
783 the possible ill effects of grease near her medicines. In fact, when directly questioned
[841] about her reaction if her medicines actually came in contact with grease, she
replied that she would simply wipe it off.

Nonbotanical Medicines

- 756 Approximately half of the contents of Sanapia's medicine kit is composed
755 of medicines of a nonbotanical nature.

Crow Feathers

Four tail feathers from a crow are tied at their base to form a loose bundle
756 and are hung near the door of a house as a protective amulet against ghosts.
755 Sanapia states that the power in the crow feathers is intrinsic to the feathers and
237 does not depend on her handling of them to give them this capacity. She always
775 utilizes this amulet when she doctors because of her belief that ghosts are especially
778 numerous when she begins to make Medicine against them. This amulet, therefore,
aids her to dispel ghosts and acts to protect the house and its occupants from the
evil designs of the angered ghosts.

Sanapia could offer no explanation as to why the ghost should fear these
778 feathers. A Kiowa informant, who uses crow feathers in much the same manner
237 as Sanapia, explained that ghosts sometimes appear at night as owls. The crow
775 and the owl are natural enemies. By using crow feathers in this manner, one is en-
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listing the crow's aid against the owls or ghosts. Sanapia, however, does not share her Kiowa and Apache neighbor's aversion to owls. 778
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You know, these Apaches sure are crazy. They get scared of them owls . . . they might hear them holler or something. It ain't nothing but a funny bird. 775
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Glass Slivers

Slivers of glass, usually obtained from broken beer bottles, are used by Sanapia whenever a certain treatment calls for the making of incisions in the flesh. This operation is almost always immediately succeeded by the use of the sucking horn or by suction applied by mouth. 756
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Several examples will adequately explain the function of these slivers of brown glass. For both a severe headache and extreme vertigo the same procedure is followed. Minute cuts are made at either temple, in the middle of the forehead, and immediately below the hairline at the nape of the neck. These incisions are approximately one-sixteenth of an inch in length and penetrate only deep enough to produce a blood flow. The sucking horn is applied after all the cuts have been made, and sucking is continued from point to point around the head until both Sanapia and the patient are satisfied with the results.

Sanapia believes that "bad blood," or "foamy stuff," causing pressure in the head area is the cause of both conditions. To relieve the symptoms, the blood, or foamy stuff, must be removed. The same notion of pain caused by the pressure of expanding foamy stuff stimulates the use of the cutting operation in the treatment of swollen joints, which Sanapia calls "rheumatism" in the absence of evidence indicating breaks or sprains. [753]

Sanapia specifies the use of only brown glass in an attempt to imitate her mother. The mother utilized what, from Sanapia's description, appear to have been brown flintlike slivers as cutting tools in doctoring. Sanapia does not know how to obtain "cutting rocks" so she employs brown glass as a close approximation.

Sucking Horn

Sanapia's sucking horn is a 4-inch section of the horn casing of a variety of domestic cattle found in her vicinity. The 4-inch section is cut from the point or extremity of the horn. This piece of horn is usually drilled and scoured to develop a clear opening from the tip of the segment of horn, which will be used as the mouthpiece, to the termination of the horn or area of widest diameter, which will be the point of application when the horn is employed in doctoring. [237]

This item is used when the treatment calls for Sanapia to attempt to suck sickness from the body of her patient. She recalls that when she was young, the sucking horn was used very little by the Comanche doctors which she had the opportunity to observe. If the treatment called for suction, the doctor employed his mouth. Sanapia believes that it was with the advent of the white man and his teaching that many diseases are spread and caught via the mouth that Comanche doctors began to depend more on the sucking horn in an effort to keep their mouth from contact with the patient. [177]

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Charcoal from a Peyote Drum

756 Before the drumhead is attached to the drum used in the ceremonies of the
755 Native American Church, the drum body is filled approximately one-third full with
778 water. Several small pieces of charcoal from any source immediately available are
534 placed in the water, and the head is then attached. The charcoal and water play
important parts in the morning rituals held at the close of Comanche peyote
meetings. Both the water and the charcoal are considered blessed by their presence
in the meeting and are thought to possess certain sacred qualities. Because of the
power which Sanapia feels pervades the charcoal from the peyote drum, she
considers this charcoal desirable as a medicine.

The charcoal from the drum is given to Sanapia after peyote meetings
which have been held on her property. She uses these fragments in several ways.
To contain the movement or spread of any kind of pain or to prohibit the spread
of swelling caused by such conditions as snakebite or sprains, she encloses the
afflicted area in a circle drawn on the patient's skin with this charcoal. Also,
in doctoring a particularly difficult case, she sometimes rubs this charcoal on her
palms to supplement her power.

White Otter Fur

756 Sanapia learned the use of a type of fur, which she states comes from a
755 white otter, as a medicine from a Shoshone woman during one of her visits to
237 the Wind River Shoshone communities around Fort Washakie, Wyoming. This
854 is specifically used to treat illnesses in infants, which are felt to be localized in
[177] the infant's head. Sanapia cuts a small square from this pelt and places it on live
coals. As the smoke rises from this smoldering fur, she holds the infant over the
coals and moves him through the rising smoke four times. This medicine smoke
is believed to enter the infant's head, where its curative qualities work their
effects. An Arapaho-Comanche uncle of Sanapia states that weasel tails are also
used in this manner by the Comanches.

Porcupine Quills

Porcupine quills are used in the treatment of children in much the same
manner as white fur. Four of the quills are deposited on coals. The infant is then
passed through the rising smoke four times. Sanapia states:

Sometimes they say kids get lonesome . . . when they sick, they just lone-
some. Those stickers are good for that. They have medicine to help little children
when I use them.

Bone Medicine

756 Sanapia calls this medicine *piamupis*, which she translates as "big old
755 giant." She also refers to it as *tsunhip*, a Comanche word for "bone." Wallace
237 and Hoebel (1952:171) write concerning this medicine:

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The madstone, or medicine bone was used for wounds, infections, boils, and pains. It was a small piece of leg bone of the giant prehistoric mammoth believed by the Comanches to be the bones of *pianampius*—the cannibal owl. Placed over the affected spot, it was supposed to draw out the poison.

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Sanapia offers the following description of what *pianampius* was supposed to have looked like.

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It look like a man . . . big, old monster. They said it got a face like a man. It's got hair all over its body and it got big feet. It's tall, you know. They die of old age, I guess. They be way out there somewhere and just sit there and die. Just after awhile dirt just covering them up, and they go under ground like that. That's where they find this medicine up to today.

Sanapia grinds this medicine, which she calls "bone medicine," into a powder and mixes it with water to form a dilute medicinal solution. She sometimes simply wets the piece of bone and applies it to the afflicted area of the body. Bone medicine is used to strengthen bones and is especially effective in the treatment of sprains. Sanapia does not mention its use in the treatment of boils, wounds, or infections.

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The Bible

Sanapia carries a Bible with her most of the time, and it is always present when she doctors. Before beginning treatment she holds the Bible in both hands before her and prays for power.

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I really read bible lots, and I go by the bible when I'm doctoring too. I always ask God to give power to my hands and mind. I pray hard to the Holy Ghost. I learned that bible while I was at Cache Creek school. My mother didn't go by the bible when she doctoring, but I do, because you got to ask God for help sometimes.

Medicine Feather

Sanapia's Medicine feather is the tail feather from a golden eagle. She employs it in every case she doctors, and of all the items which she carries when she doctors, this is the most revered. The feather is used to ceremonially "fan" her patient at various points during the course of treatment and as a general prop in her doctoring performances. It is always cedared before and after use.

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"Fanning" is an act of blessing as well as a strictly curative act when performed by Sanapia. When it is being used as a tool in the doctoring procedure, she employs the feather to waft the smoke from certain smoldering medicines over her patient. At times though, during treatment and always immediately after treatment, Sanapia lightly taps the patient with her Medicine feather around the face and head, making four passes over the face and forehead and four passes over the back of the head. She then taps four times on each arm with a fanning motion. This is preceded by four fanlike taps on the chest and back and four

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756 fanning passes over the front and back of the body from the waist down. Sanapia
755 prays that her patient may live a long, healthy life as she fans him and that all
237 evil will be blown away from the patient by the motion of the feather. She explains
825 that she has the power of the eagle; and when she touches a person with her
778 Medicine feather, it is as if the eagle were touching them, instilling in them
some of its Medicine. Her feather carries with it the tabus associated with her
other medicine articles. However, a specific emphasis was placed by her mother
on the prohibition of taking the Medicine feather into a room or area in which
there is a large group of people.

That eagle got some kind of power that I use for Medicine. I got one eagle
feather, and it is really powerful, that thing. And I believe it. I done many
works with that feather. I believe it.

Indian Lard

756 "Indian lard" is the name Sanapia applies to tallow or rendered beef fat.
757 She uses it as a general purpose salve, though she states that it is especially
efficacious in the treatment of severe burns. Also, it is her only remedy for consti-
pation: Two or three tablespoonsful of lukewarm liquified tallow are administered
to a patient with constipation.

Mouth Wash

The majority of cases which Sanapia treats involve the sucking operation.
When the sucking is completed, Sanapia requires something to kill the "poison"
and the disagreeable taste which is left in her mouth. Her mother used kerosene;
[278] however, Sanapia prefers a commercial brand of mouth wash and carries a small
bottle of it in her medicine kit.

Red Paint

756 The red paint used by Sanapia is obtained by grinding and powdering a
755 dark red clay which she finds west of Geary, Oklahoma. The paint is reconstituted
278 by mixing it with water or tallow.

386 The paint is ever present in all of her blessing ceremonies. She also uses
this paint at the termination of her treatment of ghost sickness. On the last day
of treatment, she paints the patient's face, lower arms, and lower legs. The patient
is instructed to wear the paint for two days before washing it off.

756 Sanapia states that painting is a prayer to the earth. The red paint is ob-
755 tained from the earth and is the color of the earth. When she applies it to her
278 patient she is asking the earth to care for him.

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The earth . . . talk to it like a mother. They call it that. Say "Watch this
man, or woman, or child. They walking on you, same color as you, they you
child. You can see that. Watch out for them during the long time they got to
be on you."

31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 NO6 Comanche NO6
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Black Kerchief

Sanapia keeps most of her medicines wrapped in pieces of black material which are commercially sold as women's head scarfs. These large black squares of cloth are also used by some males as Western-style ties. When Sanapia is traveling without her medicine kit, though carrying her Medicine feather, she keeps it wrapped in a black kerchief.

The black kerchief, worn knotted at the throat, is a customary sign among the Comanches and neighboring tribes of a possessor of Medicine. Sanapia was instructed to always wear the black kerchief as a symbol of her powers. She does not wear this badge today for fear of ridicule. Sanapia does, however, keep a black kerchief tied to the headboard of her bed. She states that black is the color of luck and good fortune. She also adds that it indicates to ghosts that the wearer is not afraid of their powers.

The black kerchief, or piece of black cloth, can be used in doctoring to cover the patient's face when he is instructed to inhale medicine smoke. Sanapia sometimes uses the black kerchief in this manner during the doctoring of ghost sickness.



Sanapia collecting medicines, 1967.

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Ghosts and Ghost Sickness

Comanche Attitudes toward Ghosts

WALLACE AND HOEBEL (1952:173) write concerning the Comanches' attitudes toward ghosts: "Ghosts did not generally bother the Comanches; but the Comanches were definitely uneasy about them." Kardiner (1945:84) states that the Comanches have no ghost fear at all. I found that not only did my older Comanche informants feel uneasy about ghosts but in most cases they were terrified by them. In almost every interview with a Comanche informant, some situation was cited that dealt with the horrors which ghosts are capable of afflicting on the living. 775

Sanapia states that the whirlwinds, or "dust devils," common in southern Oklahoma are the only form which the ghosts take which is entirely visible to the human eye. In addition this is the only form by which the ghost will make his presence known during daylight hours. The nocturnal guise of the ghost is probably humanlike, in Sanapia's opinion, though she states that she has never seen a ghost at night. This fact is irksome to her because she believes herself to be an expert on the matter of ghosts and their behavior among the Comanches. She considers the lack of this experience as a major flaw in her background, though she accounts for it by mentioning the fear which her Medicine inspires in ghosts. The following is her description of an attempt she made to meet a ghost: [823]

I tried it on a real dark night. I took my flashlight and walked from here to the highway. The darkest night. That's what I supposed to do because the ghost hates me and I hate it. He ain't never going to do nothing to me because I'm going to overpower that ghost. I could kill it, and the things that it done to a person. He won't do that to me because I got that Medicine. So I walk here to the highway the darkest night. They say there's ghost on the road, but I never did see any. I went to the highway, and then I come back. I just wanted to try. If there was a ghost, I never did hear one, I never see one. Nothing touch me, nothing in my way. I just wanted to see how it was for them to scare [756]

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775 Sanapia reports that ghost sickness is sometimes called "stroke" by white
753 men. She makes a distinction between the two and will not attempt to doctor
[754] someone with a stroke, feeling that this affliction is a white man's disease and
therefore the province of white doctors. Sanapia states that persons suffering from
ghost sickness exude an offensive odor which is not present in the case of stroke.
The ghost-sickness victim also possesses an aura of evil, detectable by Sanapia
because of her special powers, which she cannot detect in a patient suffering from
[754] stroke. The visible symptoms of the two can be very similar though. Further,
certain effects of witchcraft can be almost identical to the symptomatic traits of
ghost sickness; however, with witchcraft Sanapia reports that the victim's eyes do
not water and he does not salivate excessively. Also, the contortions of the face
and the contractions of the hands and arms usually appear in spasmodic cycles
rather than as a relatively constant state of contorted paralysis as in ghost sickness.

775 Wallace and Hoebel (1952:174) make the following statement when
753 discussing Comanche *puhakuts*: "Sorcery with ghost medicine is supposed to
754 cause paralysis." As already mentioned, and as will be more fully discussed in Chapter
756 5, witching or sorcery by an eagle doctor, a doctor with ghost Medicine, not only
causes paralysis but a type of paralysis almost identical to that which appears in
ghost sickness. The conclusion seems to follow that a doctor with ghost Medicine,
or power greater than ghosts, would have the ability to control the behavior of
ghosts in any way that he wished, from dismissing them or their effects on living
men to directing them to perform harmful acts to humans. Sanapia does not
recognize the connection in the similarity in the symptom of ghost sickness and
witch sickness, and she maintains that doctors with her particular powers are
only able to cure the effects of the ghost's actions, but they are unable to affect
the behavior of ghosts in any way, such as directing them to harm a specific
individual.

Ghost Fear in the Basin and on the Plains

775 In discussing the roots of Comanche culture, it was noted that a lively
[775] ghost fear was present among the Basin-Range peoples. When the Comanches
moved onto the Plains, this ghost fear apparently disappeared, or, at least its
prevalence greatly diminished (Kardiner 1945:84; Wallace and Hoebel 1952:
173). However, my field research has shown that at present the more traditional
Comanches possess a prominent ghost-fear complex. What factors can be sug-
gested to explain the deemphasis of ghost fear in the Comanche transition from
the Basin to the Plains, and how can its reappearance in twentieth-century
Comanche society be accounted for?

775 Kardiner (1945:94) suggested that ghost fear, and possibly the prevalence
154 of witchcraft, decreased in importance in the transition from Basin to Plains
571 because the Plains Comanches were able to release aggressions and hostility out-
side the primary group through the institutionalized war complex. My model
Basin culture possessed no patterns of warfare through which intra-socially
spawned tensions and aggression could be released in such a way that the societal

HABITS OF GHOSTS • 71

society. Therefore the dangers of aggressing toward a source which could effectively retaliate is lessened. Although witch fear serves this same function in some cultures, the particular nature of Comanche witchcraft beliefs precludes its similar use in Comanche society. In Comanche society witchcraft is usually worked by *pubakuts*. Therefore, the individual who may have witched your uncle last month may be the only one who could cure you if you contracted ghost sickness tomorrow.

Debt to the Kiowa and Kiowa-Apache

It appears very likely that the Comanches borrowed heavily from their Kiowa and Kiowa-Apache neighbor's ghost beliefs to revitalize and supplement their own ghost complex. Possibly, the Comanche ghost complex lost much in complexity and elaboration during the many decades of its relative insignificance among the nomadic Comanches. The contemporary Comanche, Kiowa, and Kiowa-Apache notions of ghosts, their nature, and their effects on the living are very similar in general design. However, Kiowa and Kiowa-Apache ghost beliefs, relative to the Comanche's, seem to be much more systematic, consistent, and elaborated. This view is substantiated by a perusal of some of the relevant field notes of others who have done research among these peoples (Bittle 1967; Freeman 1968). Sanapia's use of a crow feather amulet against ghosts can be presented as a specific example. Sanapia and several other Comanche informants, though feeling that crow feathers act to repel ghosts, could offer no explanation for this peculiar property of the crow feathers. Kiowa and Kiowa-Apache informants, however, were quick to point out that the crow is the natural enemy of the owl, a standard guise of the ghosts. Therefore, crow feathers are magically used to enlist the aid of the crow against the owl. Comanches do not generally hold this notion of the association of the owl with ghosts, though they value crow feathers as protective amulets against ghosts. It appears that the Comanches borrowed the crow feather amulet without borrowing the rationale for its use.

Habits of Ghosts

Comanche ghost notions are uncomplicated. The following themes appear consistently in the accounts of actual ghost contact, though not so consistently in the idealized ghost lore. The Comanches have defined the ghost's operating hours to that time between sunset and sunrise and its area of operation in the majority of cases to any place that is relatively isolated. Though the ghost can appear during the daylight hours as a whirlwind, I collected no accounts of ghost sickness being contracted during that time. Cedar smoke or cedar leaves serve the Comanches as a totally effective ghost repellent. Thus, it seems that it would be a simple matter to avoid the ghosts: Keep a supply of cedar leaves in your house and do not wander abroad at night in an isolated area unaccompanied. Yet

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775 Comanches still incur ghost sickness and under conditions which they could have
154 voluntarily avoided, conditions in which their culture assures them the ghost will
be found. This strongly suggests the possibility that a Comanche may at some
period in his life develop the need or desire to contract ghost sickness.

Preliminaries to the Treatment of Ghost Sickness

775 When an individual has contracted ghost sickness and has decided to seek
754 Sanapia's aid in alleviating his distress, he first commissions an intermediary to
arrange the initial interview between Sanapia and himself. This step can also
be taken by the spouse of a patient. Since Sanapia is an older woman, the liaison
should also be an older woman. The preferred intermediary would be a woman
who had grown up with Sanapia, for they would be acquainted, would be of the
[465] same age and sex, and generally would have the same background. The potential
patient pays the older woman to "speak for him." The payment is usually made
in money.

The older woman approaches Sanapia with the afflicted person's request
for treatment. This meeting is very informal and does not appear to be bound
with any ritual behavior. The liaison discovers if Sanapia is accessible, when she
would consent to meet with the patient, what kind of payment she would require,
and if there are any specific kinds of behavior which Sanapia would require of
the patient. It does not follow that a woman who has known Sanapia for a number
of years would be able to know the answers to these questions simply from
previous experience with Sanapia. Sanapia's accessibility depends on her schedule
or proposed activities, as does the time when she would meet with the patient.
[465] Although the payment of a doctor is standardized to a degree, Sanapia will perhaps
broadly suggest to the liaison that there is something which she needs and which
would be readily acceptable as payment. Her opinion of the required deportment
of the patient may change as her moods change, or perhaps as a result of a "real
dream."

The importance of the liaison is stressed by informants who have been
Sanapia's patients. Sanapia does not consider the liaison necessary, though she
admits that she likes to know something about the person before he approaches
her as a patient. The impression received from interviews with most informants
who have been Sanapia's patients was that they really did not know exactly what
was demanded of them when they desired to contract the services of a Medicine
woman. The liaison also functions as the advisor on the deportment demanded of
the patient by a Medicine woman.

775 When the first interview has been arranged and the patient is preparing
756 to visit Sanapia, he makes a point to dress humbly. No jewelry is worn. His clothing
391 should, by its poorness, add to the pitiable and humble image he wishes to present
376 to Sanapia. He also must follow this theme in his conversation with Sanapia. The
775 patient must act the part of the pitiable supplicant who is throwing himself on
756 Sanapia's mercy and good graces. This is the standard posture utilized in prayers,
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31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 N06 Comanche N06
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Ritual payment: four corn shucks, Bull Durham tobacco, and green cloth.

and in situations in which one individual must make a major request of another. By demeaning yourself to another, you are, in effect, pressuring him to acquiesce to your wishes; for by the Comanche code of generosity if he refused a request presented in such a fashion, he would indeed be a despicable person. A doctor who refused such an approach would be judged even more harshly by his community and his Medicine, for he has made an oath to uphold this code. This type of behavior on the part of the prospective patient acts as a normative pressure in the patient's attempt to contract Sanapia's services. 775 756 514

The formal contract occurs when the patient initiates the ritual involved with his request for Sanapia's aid. The short period of time which passes between the patient's appearance before Sanapia and the beginning of his ritual approach is described by Sanapia as follows: 775 756

He might come here to my house, maybe somewhere else where I'm staying. "Do you know why I'm here?" I tell him, "Yeah. I guess I know why you come to see me." He be looking down at the floor and talking in a pitiful way. I just be sitting there and don't say nothing at first. I know why he's there and I just sit down and wait for him to say what he's got to say . . . just be sitting there quiet. I be watching him all the time. 514 193

The patient then produces the demanded items of payment which he has been instructed to bring by his liaison-advisor. This approach ritual payment consists of a piece of dark green cloth, a commercially obtained ¾-ounce bag of Bull Durham tobacco, and four corn shuck cigarette "papers." The patient rolls a cigarette, takes four puffs, and hands the cigarette to Sanapia. When she takes it, the contract is made. Wallace and Hoebel state: "It is true that the Comanches 775 756 276

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775 smoked for pleasure, but never casually, and when smoking ceremonially, it was
756 an oath, a signature to an agreement, a pledge on the part of the smoker" (1952:
276 180). After Sanapia has taken the cigarette, thus agreeing to the contract, the
775 patient places the green cloth in front of her and lays the Bull Durham and the
756 corn shuck leaves on the cloth.

465 Sanapia states that the requirement of the piece of dark green cloth follows
from the nature of the major medicine which she employs in the treatment of
ghost sickness. This type of payment can no doubt be connected with the ritual
involved in her collection of *bekuinasu*, or "swelling medicine." It is necessary
for Sanapia to pay the plant with a piece of green cloth before extracting it
from the earth.

The medicine I use, that swelling medicine, got green leaves. The cloth
goes with that. That's what the meaning of the dark green goods supposed to
be. It stand for that, you might say. That kind of medicine get them well and
they paying for it.

775 When Sanapia has accepted the cigarette and taken the required four
756 puffs, she says to the patient, "Tell me your troubles." The patient then begins
755 to inform Sanapia of the specific reasons that he has sought her aid and generally
to unburden himself concerning any and all varieties of "trouble" which he is
experiencing. According to Sanapia, this patient monologue can continue for
several hours. It is during this outpouring that Sanapia makes her diagnosis or
decides exactly what course of action she will pursue regarding the patient.

Sanapia's doctoring ethics forbid her to divulge anything about which a
patient has spoken to her. Many of Sanapia's expatients were aware of this fact
or were advised of it by their liaisons, and they mentioned "how good it was to
talk to that old lady." The patient has a rare opportunity to speak to an old and
therefore, it is assumed, wise woman and to know that her supernatural sanctions
forbid her to repeat anything she has been told. They are able to gain the counsel
of a woman who has had many years experience in listening to these confidential
disclosures. The patient also knows that because of the nature of the doctor-
patient relationship, Sanapia will only pity him and offer sympathy. It would be
considered impolite and improper if Sanapia censured her patient for anything
he might say during his monologue.

What they tell me I ain't supposed to tell anybody. It is so sad sometimes
to listen to them. They say horrible things sometimes, but I guess that's because
they sick peoples. But they come here and I can get them well. I've helped many
people that way.

The psychotherapeutic tenor of Sanapia's doctoring is illustrated by the
fact that she bases her diagnosis upon the nature of the emotional ventilation of
the patient during his rambling monologue. She does not recognize that she bases
her diagnosis on the content of the patient's disclosures but only that she makes
her diagnosis after this occurrence. However, it is obvious from the material

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which has been presented and the material still to be presented that Sanapia is very aware of the psychological factor in illness and the necessity of treating psychological as well as physiological symptoms in a patient. 756
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Treatment of Ghost Sickness

Immediately after this first interview, Sanapia instructs the patient to bathe in the stream which flows west of her house and to change his clothes. The actual treatment will begin after sunrise on the day following the first interview. Between this time and the time of the initiation of treatment, the patient is treated as a guest of Sanapia's household. During this time Sanapia sharpens her first diagnosis by a more thorough examination of the patient. Continual bathing is the only activity which is required of the patient. Since Sanapia will have to apply her mouth to the patient in her doctoring, she instructs him to wash often so he will be as clean as possible when Sanapia begins treatment. The notion of the magical effect of water is also probably present, though Sanapia never directly alluded to this. 775
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Sanapia will doctor her patient three times daily for a period of two days. The treatment will be given at sunrise, midday, and sunset. By the morning of the third day the patient should be cured. Sanapia then blesses him, and the patient is dismissed. If, by the morning of the third day, the patient is not well, Sanapia continues her doctoring through another series of six treatments. After four days if the patient shows no sign of improvement, Sanapia will concede that she has failed in her attempts to cure her patient and will suggest either that he go to the white doctors in Lawton to obtain any comfort which they can supply or that he resign himself to his impending death. However, Sanapia states that even if she knows that her patient is going to die, she will usually not tell him because, as she says, "I can't stand to look at them when I have to say that to them. It makes me feel just so bad that I can't do it." Sanapia's ability to foretell the death of a patient is not solely based on her developed skills at prognosticating from the individual's physical condition. She states that she hears a voice which tells her that absolutely nothing can be done to save her patient. 775
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I hear, "He's dead right now, he's dead right now." And I know they going to die. I know that part too. They would get up and sit up and talk and walk. Well, they eat their food and drink water and they feel good. But I know that's the last meal they going to have. That's the last drink they going to have.

Before sunrise on the day that she will begin treatment and before she awakens her patient, Sanapia selects and prepares the medicines she will use. She then ties them in a cloth bundle, for she will take them with her when she, accompanied by her patient, goes to make her prayers with the rising sun. She then awakens her patient, prepares his breakfast, and takes him to a secluded place on a small knoll south of her house. It is still dark when they walk to the selected place of prayer. Sanapia sits facing east with her patient beside her. She 775
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775 then unwraps her medicines and exposes them on the cloth in which they were
755 wrapped.

756 Both Sanapia and her patient smoke Bull Durham tobacco wrapped in corn
782 shucks as they wait for the sun to rise. Sanapia prays to the earth immediately
[278] before sunrise, and when the sun appears, she directs her prayers to it.

In the morning, before the sun come up, you go out away from the house, where nobody can hear you and you pray. You touch the ground with your hands, four times, and say . . . I don't know where it came from, but you say, "Mother earth, I want you to take my words. I want you to do what I want. I'm walking over you. I live on you, and I love you because you're my land." Say things like that to it. That sun not up yet. But it's the big eagle . . . talk to it like it's eagle . . . think of it like that, you know. It's going to fly up pretty soon when the sun comes up, and that's the eagle going to do everything I want.

776 The sun and the earth were the two greatest sources of power in the
821 nomadic Comanche culture. Wallace and Hoebel (1952:190) write that ". . . only
823 the sun, moon, and earth were looked upon as semi-deities." They were also personified and addressed in prayer. The earth was considered second only to the sun in supernatural importance by the Comanches; however, though they were active in the affairs of men, neither the sun nor the earth gave personal power (Wallace and Hoebel 1952:195-197). Also in the content of the pages just cited are numerous mentions of the earth being addressed as "mother" by the Comanches. Kardiner (1945:63), when discussing Comanche beliefs associated with magic and power, writes: "The greatest powers were the earth, and the sun, with which the eagle was felt to be associated."

775 When the sun appears over the horizon, Sanapia begins her prayers in
755 which she will ask "the eagle" to aid her in healing her patient. The patient,
756 seated beside her, is instructed to pray for his recovery and to put his faith and
782 trust in the powers of the earth and sun. She also indicates her medicines, exposed to the sun, and asks that it will fill them with power.

[377] This period of prayer, first to the earth and then to the rising sun, lasts about half an hour, or until the sun has completely cleared the horizon. Sanapia then takes her patient back to her house, where her husband or son have already prepared the pecan wood coals which Sanapia will need when she begins to doctor. [824]
[237] Pecan coals are desired because they form long-burning, even coals. At this time she will attach her crow feather amulet to a beam on her front porch. She sometimes affixes several crow feathers to her patient's wrist.
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As mentioned previously, in doctoring, Sanapia is alone with her patient. 775 If she is in a tent or teepee, she sits on the south side of the tent, which is customarily facing east, and positions her patient directly in front of her. He lies on his 755 back with his head toward the west. The medicines she will use are placed to [823] her right, and the pecan coals are placed in an iron kettle or shovel so their position can be changed as Sanapia doctors. When she is in a house, she attempts to duplicate these conditions as closely as possible.

After her patient is situated, Sanapia begins her attempt to mobilize her

TREATMENT OF GHOST SICKNESS • 77

various power sources for the task at hand. She deposits some cedar on the coals⁷⁷⁵ and smokes her Medicine feather by lightly waving it through the rising smoke⁷⁵⁵ four times. She then lays her feather on the fragment of Mexican sarape, which⁷⁵⁶ also underlies the medicines she will use, and holds her hands in the medicine smoke. With a washing motion, she draws the smoke over her face, arms, chest, and legs. After she "cleanses" herself with the smoke, she takes her feather and ceremonially fans her patient.

She then takes her Bible between her palms and, extending her arms before⁷⁷⁵ her, she prays to "God and Jesus and especially the Holy Ghost" to assist her⁷⁵⁵ in healing her patient. If she is inspired to do so, she will sometimes open her⁷⁵⁶ Bible at random and read from it in an attempt to receive a sign from "God,⁷⁷⁴ Jesus, or the Holy Ghost" concerning the direction she should take in her doc-⁷⁸²toring, or the possible outcome of her treatment.

Next, Sanapia picks up her Chief Peyote, and holding it in her right⁷⁷⁵ hand, she speaks to it. As mentioned in the chapter on medicines, Sanapia⁷⁵⁵ will usually threaten the peyote rather than beseech it or pray to it when she⁷⁵⁶ uses it in doctoring. As she talks to it, she will transfer it from hand to hand in⁷⁷⁸ order to draw the power it possesses into her hands.

After Sanapia has made her opening prayers, she is in a very agitated⁷⁷⁵ emotional condition. This is mentioned both by Sanapia and by some of her⁷⁵⁵ expatients. She considers the chills, shaking, and trembling that she experiences⁷⁵⁶ as signs that her power has entered her, and she will not begin to doctor until⁷⁵² she reaches this state.

And when I pray like that . . . well, that power just come over me, comes down and gives me that chills and I start shaking all at once and pretty soon it goes away and then I start. Sometimes I can't hardly touch them, the way my hand be shaking. It makes me feel like that power wants to make me get them well right now.

When she has regained control of her hands after the siege of trembling,⁷⁷⁵ Sanapia begins the treatment proper. She takes a segment of the white root of⁷⁵⁵ *bekuinatsu* and masticates it to a moist pulp. She then spews it over the patient's⁷⁵⁶ face, head, and arms if they have been affected by the ghost contagion. She also takes this moist pulp, and, after rolling it between her palms, she rubs it over the areas of the patient's body which exhibit symptoms of ghost sickness. After so doing, she deposits this premasticated root in the patient's mouth and instructs him to swallow it.

Sanapia then chews another piece of *bekuinatsu* together with a few leaves of sweet sage to sweeten her mouth and, retaining this concoction in her mouth, applies her mouth to the contorted areas of the patient's face to suck out the sickness. Although she has the option of utilizing her sucking horn in other cases, she is obliged to use her mouth in the doctoring of ghost sickness.

Her mouth and hands are the areas of her body which are believed to be especially charged with power. This is the rationale for the spewing of medicines on a patient, the administering of medicines which have been premasticated by

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775 Sanapia, Sanapia's handling of the medicines before she applies them to her
755 patient, and the need of the direct application of the doctor's mouth in the
756 treatment of ghost sickness, the most tenacious sickness Sanapia encounters.

When Sanapia turns her attention to the patient's twisted hands, a contortion which occurs in most cases of ghost sickness reported by Sanapia, her behavior and "bedside manner" undergo a radical change—from intensity and outwardly appearing agitation to gentleness and calm. She puts cedar and rock medicine on the coals to produce medicine smoke and then, manipulating the patient's hand, holds it over the rising smoke. During this phase of treatment she croons and sings to the patient and assures him that her powers will enable him to recover. She will also, at times, drape a black kerchief or a towel on the patient's face as she fans the medicine smoke over his face. After the smoking of the hand, she smooths it with her Medicine feather while her crooning tone is continued.

When her treatment of any afflicted extremity is completed, Sanapia once again places cedar and rock medicine on the coals and fans the medicine smoke over the patient. She then smokes the Medicine feather and draws the smoke over herself with a washing motion of her hands. At this point the first treatment is terminated.

The patient is instructed to rest after this first treatment. Sanapia rewraps her medicines before leaving the room in which she has been doctoring. She then immediately washes her hands and rinses her mouth with a commercial brand of mouth wash in order to destroy any "poison" which she feels may be in her mouth.

Between treatments the patient is continually dosed with a decoction of [24] *bekuinatsu*. There are no dietary restrictions placed on him during his two-day treatment. Sanapia instructs her patient to rest, pray, and think only pleasant thoughts between treatments. During the midmorning and midafternoon when Sanapia is not involved in doctoring, she busies herself with her household chores and observes no special type of behavior connected with her doctoring. She does insist on decorum and a general quiet among household members during the several days of treatment for the sake of her patient.

When the sun reaches its zenith at midday, the second treatment is begun. This treatment will be similar to the morning treatment. By the end of the second treatment Sanapia will be able to determine if the patient is responding favorably. If the prognosis is good at this point, the subsequent treatments will all be similar to the first one. However, if the patient is showing no sign of improvement or is worsening, Sanapia will begin to add more elements to her basic pattern of treatment. She will also be more susceptible to inspired variations since she believes that when her powers are with her to their fullest potential, any thoughts she has are of the order of a supernatural directive.

Use of the Peyote Meeting

775 If she feels that a crisis is developing with respect to her patient's condi-
755 tion, she will take her first step to augment the intensity of treatment during the
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USE OF THE PEYOTE MEETING • 79

third treatment at sunset on the first day. Sanapia will usually organize a special-
ized peyote meeting at this juncture. She carefully selects those to be invited
choosing only three or four individuals who she believes are especially good people
and who have prayed with her in the past in similar situations. The local peyote
leader is always included in this group since Sanapia concedes that it is his right
to lead the meeting, though it is understood that it will be led for her purposes.

This meeting is held indoors. The fire is laid on a piece of sheet metal
supported on several bricks. Most of the standard elements of a Comanche peyote
meeting are present in this meeting—water drum, gourd rattles, sage wand, cedar
staff, Chief Peyote, feather fans, eagle feathers, and Bull Durham tobacco and
corn shucks for ceremonial smoking. The tepee is obviously lacking, as is the
crescent-shaped earthen altar, the leader's whistle, the water ceremonies, and the
ceremonial breakfast.

The meeting proceeds in the usual manner. Sanapia doctors throughout
the meeting at those times when she feels particularly inspired to do so. When
she desires to doctor, the leader signals those present to cease the singing and
passing of the drum and accompanying paraphernalia. Sanapia then waits for the
fire to die down to coals before she begins to doctor. She bases her treatment
during the meeting on the basic pattern which she followed in the first two
treatments earlier that day. However, at this time she adds the use of peyote to her
doctoring.

After the smoking of her Medicine feather and herself, the fanning and
smoking of her patient and all those present, and the applying of *bekwinatsa* she
gives the patient four peyote buttons which she first has masticated. After the
patient has taken the required first four buttons, he is doctored with a decoction
of peyote. This "tea" is drunk by the patient, and it is applied externally by
Sanapia as well as being spewed over the patient's face, head, and hands.

At sunrise when the meeting ends and the peyote drum is disassembled,
Sanapia sometimes requests the moist drumhead from the leader and utilizes
it in doctoring her patient. She presses the wet hide over the top of the patient's
head and forms the hide to the contours of the patient's face while she prays
that the patient's face will be cured when she takes the hide off. There is the
notion that the pliable qualities of the wet hide will be transferred to the patient's
face, and as Sanapia forms the hide, so might she reform the patient's contorted
countenance.

She takes some of the sweet sage used to support the Chief Peyote used
during the meeting, and after chewing it and rolling it between her hands, she
rubs it over the afflicted areas of the patient's body. Sanapia takes a mouthful of
water from the peyote drum and blows it over her patient. Some of the charcoal
from the drum is used by Sanapia to draw a series of concentric circles on the
contorted area of the patient's face. This magical act is supposed to constrict the
"foamy stuff" which is causing the contortions of the face by first drawing it within
the outer circle, then within the next smaller circle, and so on until the sickness
is so localized that it will be a simple task for Sanapia to suck it out.

The seven stone "bosses" which are employed to attach the drum head
to the kettle drum body are also utilized by Sanapia as medicine. Sanapia takes

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775 several in each hand and taps the patient's face. This is felt to transfer the positive
755 qualities of these stones—firmness and stability—to the patient's face.
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Intercession of the Medicine Eagle

775 If the patient is still not improved after the peyote meeting, Sanapia will
755 move to her ultimate level of doctoring intensity by attempting to call her Medicine
756 eagle to her assistance through the intercession of the spirits of her mother and
78 maternal uncle. This step is not taken at the beginning of treatment because of
778 the dangers involved with the presence of so great an amount of supernatural
power. It is possible that she might kill her patient by exposing him to this burst
[76] of supernatural energy. Also, Sanapia forestalls calling her ultimate powers into
play because of her feeling that the physical reactions which this powerful presence
produces in her will ultimately cause her death.

On the second day, if she has decided to follow this course of action, she
refrains from her sunrise and midday doctoring. The patient spends the day
resting and drinking great quantities of peyote and *bekwinatsi* "tea." Sanapia
passes the daylight hours alone in some secluded area preparing herself for the
traumatic activities in which she will be engaged after sunset.

I set somewhere out there away from peoples . . . be by myself. I don't do
nothing but sit and think about things. Like what my mother told me about
things, and what my uncle told me. Think about all the years I come along and
how up to today I'm still living. I don't do anything different from what I do if
I am sitting anywhere by myself . . . just thinking about them things.

[515] Immediately before sunset Sanapia goes to the stream which flows near
[358] her house and washes her hands and face before returning to her house. Any
small children or infants who happen to be members of the household at this
time are taken to spend the night with relatives in a nearby town, so they need
not be exposed to the potential dangers of the night's doctoring activities. Sanapia
firmly instructs her patient that he must do whatever she requests of him during
the coming night. If he reacts slowly to her commands, he could die. Once again,
this instruction is given in recognition of the dangers of supernatural power.

775 The night's doctoring follows the basic pattern of the first two treatments
755 of the first day; however, this last treatment of the second day will continue
756 throughout the night and will contain the crucial element of Sanapia's singing of
778 her Medicine song. Sometime late in the night when Sanapia feels the proper
787 inspiration, she begins to sing her song. She will sing it over and over again until
533 the spirits she is calling come to her. The first singing of the song takes place
with her patient as she fans him with her Medicine feather. She then leaves the
house and continues her singing as she sits alone in the dark.

Sanapia first sees the spirits of her mother and uncle as two lights burn-
ing on the crest of a hill approximately a hundred yards south of her house. They
slowly approach her. The rapidity of their approach corresponds to the intensity
of Sanapia's singing, for it is her song which is drawing them to her. They

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finally stand before her, looking entirely natural and lifelike, much as they looked during Sanapia's adolescence. Sanapia continues her singing as they stand silently before her. In her song she tells them that she is alone and helpless and that she has no one to whom she can turn for help but them. She reminds them of their pledge of aid whenever she might need it during her lifetime. Sanapia may have to repeat her song for several hours as the spirits stand gazing down at her. Finally, with gestures of the hands they indicate that Sanapia will have what she wishes.

This means that the spirits of her mother and uncle have interceded with the Medicine eagle on her behalf. If the Medicine eagle is going to appear to Sanapia, it is at this time that he makes his appearance. Sanapia does not move after the spirits of her mother and uncle have left her. She ceases her Medicine song, but she remains to pray for a while longer before returning to her patient. Sanapia also must rest while her heart and breathing recover normalcy after the agitation they experienced during the apparition of the spirits.

She describes the appearance of the Medicine eagle in the following account:

I was so tired then and I was crying too. Sitting there and seeing my mother like that. All at once I felt cold wind pushing me down. It was on my head and all around . . . flatten down the grass around me and I had to lean on my hands because it was heavy like I thought it might push me down right over my face. My blanket was blowing off me and I was grabbing for it . . . blowing my hair all over. Got scared and started shaking. Boy! that wind blow dust in my eyes and I was rubbing them when all at once everything got calm . . . like a dream like when you be sleeping way in the night. I saw that eagle . . . big, big, like an eagle . . . shining so pretty on its feathers. And I guess I was being silly because I start crying some more . . . just like some old woman. But I hear it in my mind, you know, say, "Go ahead, get him well. You can do it." Then I don't see nothing . . . I guess it's gone then.

Sanapia returns to her patient and attempts to utilize her newly acquired power increase to cure him. She uses only her Medicine feather and medicine smoke at this point. Most of her energy is aimed at instilling in her patient, through her prayers and contact with her feather, enough power to negate the malevolent forces which are acting to keep the patient from recovering. She does not come in physical contact with the patient at this time, for she feels that such contact would kill him.

If her patient has recovered during the night, she takes him outside with her before sunrise to make her morning prayers. She then blesses him in the standard manner and instructs him to wear the red paint for two days before he washes it off. This blessing on the morning of the third day after the initiation of doctoring marks the end of treatment.

Payments

The final payment is made within the succeeding weeks. Sanapia does not state a price but must accept whatever is offered her. She has received from

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775 \$25 to \$100 for her services as a doctor. The normal payment consists of about
756 \$30, plus groceries and enough cloth for several dresses. Several informants stated
465 that the gift of groceries is connected with a belief that Sanapia eats the sickness
[26] which a patient might have; therefore, she should be given something good to eat
as payment.

Sanapia's many comments concerning the difficulty of being a doctor often deal with the question of payments.

Some people don't pay. They have to but they don't. They say, "Well, we haven't got no money now, but when we got money we'll pay you." They don't do it. My husband got to talking about it with some people that came here once. I was in there listening. He said, "Lots of people come here, and they come in real sick, real sick. She takes her time and doctor them, and she wait on them, and she even cook for them and give them eats because its two or three days before she get through with them. They promise her this and that and they never give it to her." There's many people that owe me that. I get tired, you know. Lots of times it get so hot in there doctoring them . . . sweating and tired out by the time I get through. And then I go through all that work for nothing.

The Necessity of Faith

755 An emergency situation sometimes arises when Sanapia must leave her
756 house and go to the patient to doctor him. In this instance all of the formal first interview rituals are ignored, and Sanapia may begin doctoring with an intensity greater than that which she would be prone to initiate in an ordinary case. Sanapia customarily makes the following statement to those who appear at her home and hurriedly insist that she come at once to doctor a sick relative: "If I catch you between here and you all's place, they ain't no use in me doctoring." In other words, if Sanapia, leaving after the petitioners, overtakes them before they reach home where the sick individual lies, it signifies to Sanapia that the petitioners either do not care very much for the sick individual since they did not hurry back to him or they do not believe in Sanapia's powers. Sanapia's customarily made statement in this situation is involved with her feeling of the necessity of men's faith in power if they desire supernatural power to operate on their behalf.

Throughout the doctoring procedure, Sanapia continually prods the patient to have faith in her powers and the powers of the sun, earth, God, peyote, Jesus, Medicine eagle, and the Holy Ghost. It can also be remembered that many of the rituals involved with Sanapia's acquisition of power from her mother were colored by tests of faith and courage. Sanapia will admit that a person who does not believe in her power cannot be doctored by her: Her doctoring will have no effect. Also, a person who does not believe in ghosts and witches cannot be harmed [755] by them. Wallace and Hoebel (1952:159) mention that the Comanches felt that if a *pubakus* did not believe in the powers he possessed, his powers would not work for him.

In order to instill this crucial element of faith in her patient, Sanapia admits that she does exaggerate her doctoring performance at times. She did not

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elaborate on this statement, only suggesting that she works to make her patient believe in her since he will not regain his health if he does not have faith in her powers. Some of Sanapia's expatients have noted her ability to make things appear and disappear; however, as mentioned previously, Sanapia will deny that she does sleight of hand. 755 756 789

Sanapia is aware that her shamanistic performance is expected by her patients and that it is a necessary element in strengthening their faith in her. However, she states that she could marshal her powers for healing without the performance, though the patient would not be highly impressed. Sanapia must move the patient to an emotional acceptance of her powers, for she feels that without the patient's confirmed faith her powers can do nothing toward curing him. Sanapia's belief that the patient's attitude toward the doctor is of significant importance in determining the outcome of the treatment is based in a sound grasp of psychotherapeutic principle, though in her case it is couched in the mystique of the faith healer.

Number of Patients per Year

How many patients does Sanapia doctor each year? This would be a difficult question to answer exactly. Sanapia does not think in these terms. Further she does not consider it "proper" to discuss the question. I would estimate, however, that she doctors approximately six cases of ghost sickness per year, and she may treat twenty patients suffering from more standard ailments during the same time. These estimates are based on clues collected during several years of interviewing and on observations of the contents of her medicine kit. I observed her medicine kit in the early fall when her medicines were almost totally depleted and watched as she collected what she felt would be a sufficient quantity of medicines to last until the next collecting season the following fall. From a knowledge of the possible combinations and quantities of dosages of these medicines, I estimated how many patients could be treated before the medicine supply would be depleted. This estimate corresponded closely with the estimates based on interview material. 756 758 788

What Is Ghost Sickness?

This is an important question. The key to understanding Sanapia's vital function in twentieth-century Comanche society rests with the answer. Ghost sickness may be an entirely organic or static affliction, perhaps a variety of organically motivated transient paralysis. Then again, a viewpoint suggesting the psychogenic nature of ghost sickness presented itself when Sanapia's accounts of ghost sickness victims were perused, particularly noting the age and sex of the victim. In the majority of cases, the victim was male, twenty-five to forty years of age. Also, based on interviews with ghost-sickness victims and information gathered from Comanche informants, it was discovered that these individuals were all very similar personalities. 121 775 764

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Ghost Sickness and Witch Sickness

Sanapia's great success in curing ghost-sickness victims appears to give further support to the idea of the psychogenesis of ghost sickness. Then again, she would also be attributed with success in curing a transient unilateral facial paralysis of an organic genesis which ran its course during the time of treatment or within a suitable time span after treatment. Of course, they both support the same conclusion to the Comanches: Sanapia can cure ghost sickness. However, if Sanapia is successful in curing ghost sickness, why does she enjoy a relative lack of success in curing the victims of witchcraft when the symptomatic manifestations of the two are practically identical? Once again, as in the discussion of ghost sickness, a valuable clue is suggested by looking at standardization in the age and sex of the victims of the witch. The institution of witchcraft will be more thoroughly surveyed in Chapter 5. It seems most appropriate that the etiology of witchcraft symptoms should be discussed at this juncture since we are approaching the question of Sanapia's cultural function as curer of afflictions believed by the Comanches to be magically or supernaturally instigated. [128]

The overwhelming majority of Comanche witch victims are infants, rarely more than several years of age. Therefore, we must base our attempt at explanation of the symptoms of witch sickness on an organic disorder which corresponds to the symptoms displayed by the witchcraft victim. The medical literature presents an account of a disorder which corresponds in type to the symptoms present in ghost sickness and witch sickness, but which is limited, with rare exceptions, to infants less than two years of age. This neuromuscular disorder, tetany, also exhibits two symptoms by which Sanapia conceptually differentiates between witch sickness and ghost sickness by the degree of their severity. Sanapia points out that though witch- and ghost-sickness victims demonstrate similar modes of contortion, the witch victim's contortions appear most often in spasmodic fashion, while this trait is less marked in ghost sickness. Also, the peculiar contractions of the hands and arms, described in discussing ghost sickness, are more prevalent in cases of witch sickness. Further, two major causes of tetany in infants result from inadequate calcium intake and vitamin D deficiency, dietary lacks which could easily occur in the relatively poor environment in which many Comanche infants are reared.

Aub (1951:1275) mentions that signs of tetany will result from alkalosis of various origins, such as hyperventilation. The relationship of the emotion of fear to hyperventilation is noteworthy. Although the infant does not understand that he is the target of the witch, his parents do. Perhaps the parents' increased anxiety over the symptoms of tetany, which they could associate with witchcraft, only acts to increase anxiety in the infant, thus more readily acting to increase the possibility of hyperventilation. It is a common observation that the emotional state of parents can affect the emotional state of their infant children. 754 854 164 152

Because of the suggested differences in etiology of ghost sickness and witch sickness, Sanapia's success with ghost sickness and relative lack of success in curing witch sickness is understandable. She can relieve some of the symptoms of

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754 witch sickness through her ability to ease the anxiety of the parents and therefore
854 decrease the anxiety which is communicated to the child. However, Sanapia cannot
164 alleviate certain factors, perhaps of an environmental nature, which have
754 caused tetany. It is also significant that with witch victims, because of their age,
Sanapia is unable to communicate. In discussing the actual treatment of ghost
sickness, it was seen that psychotherapeutic traits in her behavior toward her
patient are ubiquitous.

Sanapia, Ghosts, and Ghost Sickness

754 A great amount of time has been spent in discussing ghosts, ghost sick-
775 ness, and the suggested causes of ghost sickness because of this complex's close
164 association to Sanapia's role in Comanche society. As an eagle doctor, Sanapia's
755 special thaumaturgic power is believed to be her ability to counteract or defeat
the ghost's malevolent influences on living men. Because of the nature of the
symptoms associated with ghost sickness and because of their probable psychogenic
etiology, she is almost always successful in treating the victim of the ghost. If the affliction
which her patient possesses is an organically based transient unilateral facial
paralysis, it will disappear of its own accord when it runs its course; and if the
disorder is hysterically induced, the patient actually cures himself, while Sanapia
more or less functions as a symbol to the patient that the time for his cure is at
hand. Of course, the psychotherapeutic value of her method of curing cannot be
minimized, and perhaps it could be said that the emotional state which she induces
in her hysterical patient functions as a trigger for his self-healing.

756 Sanapia's most important overt function in contemporary Comanche society
775 is as a symbol of the Comanche's ability to withstand the attacks of the ghosts.
164 She also serves as the necessary key to the psychological reintegration of marginal
Comanches who have "employed" the ghost-sickness conversion reaction. As long
as Sanapia, or other eagle doctors, stand as a source of cure, Comanche individuals
can contract ghost sickness as a means of relieving certain intolerable emotional
states. This could also serve to explain the longevity of the institution of the
Comanche eagle doctor, while the other kinds of Comanche native doctors have
756 long since ceased to exist. The human disorder associated with the eagle doctor's
177 particular brand of specialization, ghost sickness, has only increased with the
775 acculturation of the Comanche people, while the specialties of the other varieties
164 of Comanche doctors have been usurped during this same process. It is ironic
that acculturation, while actively corroding the, overall complexion of traditional
Comanche culture, has also served to revive and augment the important function
of a symbol of traditional Comanche culture, the Medicine woman.

Witchcraft and the Conceptualization of Illness

Black Magic

WITCHCRAFT and the conceptualization of illness, two seemingly separate areas, are best discussed together because Sanapia's notions of witchcraft present the most obvious examples of her manner of conceptualizing human illness and its causes. The variety of Comanche witchcraft described here is carried out by one of the major methods of the classic witch, a ritual of malevolent imitative magic; however, its perpetrator is not a witch but a shaman who has only temporarily utilized his supernatural powers and knowledge or ritual for purposes of evil. I will use the noun and the verb forms of the word "witch" as my Comanche informants do, keeping this distinction in mind. E. Adamson Hoebel (1940:85) writes: "The Comanche made no basic distinction between a Medicine man and a sorcerer. Medicine was a two-edged sword. It could cut for good or evil." 753 754 [754] 754 756

Witchcraft is an extremely delicate area to investigate among contemporary Comanches. In the sense that the term is presently used among Comanches, it is synonymous with the most diabolical kind of murder. A Medicine woman who was notorious for her acts of malevolent magic has died only within the last several years, and it appears that many Comanches now look upon Sanapia, the only Medicine woman still living, not only with a calculated respect but also with suspicion and a certain amount of fear. The label "witch" was never directly applied by my informants to Sanapia, though some Comanches noted her quick temper and stated that they knew Comanches who were afraid to associate with her lest they arouse her temper and run the risk of having it directed at them.

Sanapia quite naturally denies that she would witch another person, though she is evasive concerning the possibility of her potential to witch if she so desired. When this specific subject presented itself in the course of our discussion, her response could be predicted. In every instance of a question which alluded to the possibility of her utilization of her powers to harm others she drew on the

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751 Bible for her response and for material to construct what she felt would be her
756 evasion of the point of the question. This is an example of the manner in which Sanapia has organized elements and sentiments of the three supernaturalistic systems which affect her life into a supportive and cohesive whole. The following quotation is standard of her manner of responding to the many questions which were directed to her concerning her potential to execute witchcraft. It should be noted that in the example given, she indirectly admits to a belief that she is at least capable of witchcraft. This also was a recurring element in all her responses to questions on this subject.

I don't think about it much, because the Bible tells me not to kill. I'll be punished if I die. God's going to do that to me. You can't steal too. Can't steal from nobody. That's what I learn in the Bible. Don't steal from nobody. Stealing is bad and people could get in trouble for it. [Proceeds to tell a story about a thief.]

Sanapia is, however, quite knowledgeable as to a Comanche method of witchcraft, a method which, in my opinion, is strictly the province of the eagle doctor. A few years before the death of the Medicine woman previously mentioned, she was invited to live with Sanapia. This fact is still very present in the minds of some Comanches who continue to allude to this when they are discussing the fear which Sanapia arouses in some of her people. Sanapia states that doctors have a special obligatory bond which motivated her to offer assistance to the older woman who, at the time, was experiencing economic and health difficulties. She does admit that during this time she learned very much about witchcraft from the older doctor, who was also an eagle doctor.

Reasons for the Use of Witchcraft

754 There are, of course, a variety of reasons why a *pahakus* would resort to
756 witchcraft. The most common reason in Sanapia's opinion is jealousy, although a
828 Medicine practitioner can also be commissioned to use his powers and knowledge of witching ritual for evil. There is also the instance in which a Medicine man is told in a dream that he will be able to save the life of his patient if he first takes another's life. Sanapia states that the latter two instances are rare in modern times and that most witchcraft victims whom she has doctored have been witched because they, or more likely their parents, inspired jealousy in certain old people who possessed *paha* and who knew how to witch. It is significant that in the several accounts of witching which Sanapia has reported, she always laid the blame for the act on old people and in almost every case on old women. It is also relevant to note that five of the six accounts which Sanapia has supplied concerning victims of witchcraft which she has doctored have been infants of less than two years of age. Sanapia, however, insists that anyone of any age can be the victim of the witch. When questioned concerning the high rate of infants as witchcraft victims, she replied that some old women whose children have left them

A METHOD OF WITCHCRAFT • 93

become jealous of the children of other women and to punish the younger women attempt to kill their children.

Sanapia feels that the incidents of witchcraft are very rare and are occurring less frequently as the older people of the tribe pass away. In her career as a doctor, a period spanning approximately thirty years, Sanapia reports only six cases of which she has had personal knowledge, though she points out that when she was younger, there were more doctors who could be approached for aid by a witchcraft victim.

The last case of this kind which Sanapia treated occurred two months after I had established rapport with her. It was the first case of witchcraft which she had doctored in four years. This was fortunate for the purposes of my investigation, for Sanapia's full attention was on the subject, and I was also able to obtain an account of the manner in which she doctored her niece's child, the victim of the witch. Before proceeding with a description of the doctoring of a witched individual, I would like to discuss a method of witchcraft known by Sanapia.

A Method of Witchcraft

When a *pubakus* has decided to witch someone, he first spends four days fasting and praying that what he is about to wish will come to pass. These four days are not as rigorously observed as the four days of "vision quest." Fasting is not total, and though he should be outside during the day where he has privacy, he is free to return to his home at night. When he goes to pray, the *pubakus* is only allowed to take water and Bull Durham tobacco and corn shucks for rolling cigarettes. He must also be at his chosen place of prayer before sunrise to make his morning prayers to the sun. This is the first of many elements in this method of witchcraft which strongly suggests that it was or is the method of the eagle doctors. Sanapia, of course, denies this.

After the period of preparation, the *pubakus* laces a short length of buckskin through his flesh and ties it in a knot, thus forming a loose loop about an inch in diameter which is attached to the flesh. This piece of buckskin can be placed anywhere on the body, though Sanapia states that it is usually visible. She is not unaware of the psychological affect such a display can have.

Maybe someone sees him like that . . . with that buckskin, they might get scared and stop doing what's making him mad. That's what I think. I ask some old man that had that when I was little what he was doing and he didn't say nothing to me. My grandmother get after me for talking to him and she told me about that part. Later I heard of it around here.

The time between the first stage of the act of witchcraft and the execution of the final stages is indeterminate in length. Perhaps, as Sanapia suggests, if the display of the buckskin loop frightens the potential victim enough, the actions which are aggravating the *pubakus* may cease, and the final stage of the witching need not occur. During this time the wearer of the buckskin loop tells no one

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754 who his potential victim might be, and it is considered a breach of etiquette to
756 quiz him on the subject. There is also the element of fear present since the
785 *pubakus*, though prepared to witch, does not name his victim until the final stage
of witchcraft, and thus any untoward actions by an individual may draw the
pubakus's pent-up resolve in a direction which could be decided by him on the
spur of the moment. Sanapia likens the *pubakus*, during this phase of witchcraft,
to a bomb which could be detonated at the slightest touch.

754 The final stage of witchcraft is initiated by sunrise on the selected day
756 and is completed by sunset on the same day. The *pubakus* takes a white eagle
237 plume and, puncturing the base of the rib, inserts a length of buckskin approxi-
mately 12 inches long. The buckskin is tied so that the plume dangles tip down
from this buckskin strand. Immediately before sunrise, carrying this one specially
prepared item, the *pubakus* goes off by himself to perform his witchcraft. He
secures the plume from the branch of a tree in such a manner that it will be
hidden from the view of a possible passerby but so it can move freely at the dic-
tates of the wind. He then sits beneath the plume and begins to pray for the
death of his victim. As he prays, he makes before him in the soil a small replica
of a grave and prays that when the plume finally breaks free from its tether,
the object of his prayers will die and enter the grave which has been prepared for
him. At sunset the *pubakus* returns to his home, his witchcraft completed. He
wears the Buckskin loop until the death of his victim, at which time he cuts it
from his skin, burns it, and throws the ashes into the nearest running water.

Kardiner (1945:67) writes that a Comanche who thought he was going
to be witched or who had been witched could pay the doctor who was responsible
to remove the "spell." Sanapia denies this and emphasizes that one of the particu-
larly horrible things about witchcraft is that it cannot be stopped once it is set
in motion. A doctor can sometimes cure the witch's victim once the witchcraft
has been actualized, but nothing can be done by a doctor before the symptoms
appear in the victim. She feels that the majority of witching situations never
reach the final stage. In her opinion the buckskin loop advertisement of the witch
usually persuades the potential victim to cease his misbehavior before the witch
finally and irrevocably sets his black magic into operation. Sanapia also states
that this is used as a form of blackmail by some Comanches.

Sanapia refers to this final stage of witchcraft as "shooting the feather."
She states that the witch causes the eagle plume to enter the body of the victim
at the moment it breaks free from its tether. The feather enters the victim immedi-
ately below the surface of the skin and proceeds to move rapidly over the entire
body area, causing the physical symptoms associated with witchcraft. It finally
lodges in some area of the victim's body, where it will eventually cause his death
if it is not removed by a doctor who possesses the Medicine required to counteract
its influence.

754 It is significant that the method of witchcraft as related by an eagle doctor
756 would have as its principle ritual an eagle plume which is prepared and utilized
825 in such a manner as to make it as much like an eagle as possible: It is placed very
high in a tree, and it is attached to the tree in such a manner that it will be
able to move freely and naturally at the motion of the wind. This follows from

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the imitative and sympathetic mystical rapport an eagle doctor possess with his supernatural patron, the eagle; and it suggests that possibly this method of witchcraft is, or was, in the form of a special Medicine solely possessed by doctors with eagle power and that doctors who possessed a different supernatural patron would also possess different method of witchcraft. The emphasis on prayers to the sun is also relevant. [782]

The Symptoms of Witch Sickness

Sanapia feels that the symptoms exhibited by an individual who has been witched are unmistakable. Such a person feels tired and listless and is unable to retain food. He wants to sleep continually and usually suffers from fever. The unique symptom of witchcraft, according to Sanapia, is excessive perspiration on the top of the victim's head, perspiration which the victim cannot feel and which can be felt only by a doctor possessing the proper Medicine. She believes that this localized fever is caused by "foamy stuff" which accumulates under the skin surface at the top of the head. The foamy stuff is, in turn, caused by the magically toxic witch's feather. Also occurring are symptoms which are very similar to the unilateral facial paralysis which appears with ghost sickness. In the case of witchcraft, however, the victim's eyes do not water, he does not salivate excessively, and the contortions of the face, hands, and arms occur in spasmodic fashion rather than the constant state of paralysis found with ghost sickness. In both cases the contortions of the face are felt to be caused by pockets of foamy stuff which accumulate under the skin. [754, 756, 755, 753, 775]

Sanapia feels that ghost and witch sickness are the most difficult types of sickness to treat because both are essentially unnatural and malevolent. In contrast, pneumonia, for example, is a natural sickness which does not possess the supernatural tenacity of illnesses which are backed by the supernatural and malevolent resolve of a ghost or witch. Thus with ghost and witch sickness, Sanapia must not only cure the symptomatic effects of these illnesses but must also act to neutralize the malevolent supernatural power which is somehow contiguous with these symptoms. [775, 754, 164, 753]

Treatment of Witch Sickness

When Sanapia doctors a victim of witchcraft, she utilizes *topinasu*, *ekapokowa:pi*, *kusiwana*, her Medicine feather, glass slivers, charcoal from the peyote drum, and her sucking horn. She prepares a thin paste of *kusiwana* and applies it to the area of the patient's body which she feels to be the place where the feather is located. *Topinasu* and *ekapokowa:pi* are deposited on live coals to produce medicine smoke which is wafted over the patient to induce healing. [754, 755, 756]

The procedure begins before sunrise on the first day of treatment when Sanapia makes her morning prayers to the rising sun. She begins treatment proper when she feels all conditions to be favorable. Exactly what criteria Sanapia uses [754, 755, 756, 787]

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754 to judge when the time is right to begin treatment would be difficult to outline.
755 A good portion of such a feeling would naturally be highly personal. Some condi-
756 tions which would be negative influences on Sanapia's decision to begin treat-
787 ment might be barking dogs, the sudden appearance of visitors, an infant's
crying, or a sudden change of weather. Sanapia would consider barking dogs or
a sudden change of weather as negative omens. The appearance of visitors or the
crying of an infant would simply be distracting to her.

754 When she initiates treatment, she first prays over the patient and fans
755 smoke produced by the *tapinatsu* and *ekapokowa:pi* over him. After her first
756 prayer, in which she calls on her powers to assist her, she takes her charcoal
787 medicine and draws a circle around the area on the patient's body in which she
feels the feather is located to prevent the feather's escape to another area of the
body. Next, she makes several incisions in the area of the circle and applies
a thin paste of *kusiwana* over the incisions. She then fans her medicine
smoke over this area and begins her attempt to suck the feather from the patient's
body.

As blood, sucked from the area of incisions, collects in her sucking horn
or in her mouth, she deposits it on a white paper plate which she keeps near her.
The entire procedure of cutting, applying medicine, fanning, and attempting to
remove the feather by suction continues until Sanapia has removed the feather or
has come to the conclusion that her powers are not sufficient to cure the patient.
When and if the feather appears in the plate of blood she shows the plate to the
patient, or the patient's parents, and pronounces him cured; and, after giving the
patient a final blessing, the treatment is completed.

The word "appears," when used in connection with the removal of the
witch's feather, must be understood in a special sense. Sanapia does not state that
she removes a real feather. She reports that the Comanche words she uses when
exhibiting the plate of blood to the patient after the "removal of the feather" means
that the effects of the feather have been removed. She feels that the witch can
project the evil potential of the plume into the body of the victim, though the
feather itself is not magically injected into the victim. Sanapia doctors to alleviate
the physical symptoms which result from the magically injected malevolent
essence of the eagle plume utilized in the act of witchcraft. This notion of trans-
mitting the essence of an object into a person was mentioned in the discussion of
Sanapia's doctoring of ghost sickness. During her doctoring in the specially
arranged peyote meeting, Sanapia attempted to transmit the pliable qualities of the
wet drumhead to the patient's face. She also applied the stone peyote drum
"bosses" to the patient's face so that, through her powers, the positive qualities
of these stones—firmness and stability—could be injected into the patient's con-
torted face to heal him. Just as Sanapia attempted to inflict positive powers from
their source to a patient, so could she use her powers to inject negative essences
of an object into an individual. But what is the particular malevolent essence of
an eagle plume which can be utilized to witch? As we discuss the manner in which
Sanapia conceptualizes the nature and cause of human illness, the answer will
present itself.

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753 of the witching feather which is injected into the victim's body is rapid and erratic motion.

The notion of swelling is included in practically every description of illness which Sanapia relates. It is also significant that one of her major medicines is *bekwinatsu*, or swelling medicine. In Sanapia's opinion, ghost sickness, pneumonia, rheumatism, asthma, headaches, vertigo, constipation, and a number of other human complaints have swelling as their central pathological core. As stated previously, the swelling is either produced by or produces a toxic liquid, usually referred to by Sanapia as foamy stuff, which by its nature expands in the body. It is this liquid or the swelling that produces this liquid, which causes the symptoms of illnesses such as those just mentioned, but not the illness itself. The foamy stuff, the only tangible and manipulatable manifestation of illness, is removed from the body by the *pubakus* by suction or by being driven out.

753 Sanapia states that she never removes an object from the patient's body claiming that she has removed the sickness, although she remembers that her mother did this. Sanapia feels that she cures by removing the poison, or foamy stuff, present in the patient's body and by using her supernatural powers to assure that through her prayers the patient may live a long and healthy life. In other words, the supernatural or unknown causes of the patient's illnesses are banished through her prayers.

751 Sanapia describes a healthy body as one which possesses a balance and calm throughout all its tissues, liquids, and organs. When something causes this balance and calm to be disrupted, sickness results. Some foreign agent moving in a rapid and erratic manner through the body is definitely unsettling to the body's parts. Swollen areas displace tissues, organs and body liquids, also unsettling the body balance. Foamy stuff irritates the body generally.

753 Sanapia is persistent in her comments that she never actually removes a real feather from the body of the victim of a witch; however, she states that 754 755 most Comanches who come to her for this treatment believe she does.

They ain't got no power . . . never learned them ways, so 'how do they know? They can think what they want to think. I get them well, or their little baby. That's what they come here for, and I do it so they can believe what they want. If it makes them happy, let them think what they like. I don't care about it myself.

From Sanapia's description of the doctoring of the witched victim, it can be seen that she does not exert herself to make him, or his parents, think any other way about the reality of the feather in his body. In other words, she never reports that there is not a feather in him, and all her behavior during the treatment only lends support to the patient's belief that there is a real feather present in his body.

754 Another aspect of the *pubakus*'s treatment of witchcraft victims is suggested by Kardiner (1945:67). He writes that Comanche doctors were able to 755 identify the individual responsible for the witching during the treatment of the 756 one who had been witched.

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With regard to Sanapia's niece's child, Sanapia said that she knew who had witched the girl but did not tell the mother for fear of frightening her. Sanapia does not suggest that any supernatural talents are involved in the ability to identify the witch. Since Sanapia believes that witchcraft can only be operated by those with a high degree of *puba*, the field of possibilities is immediately narrowed. She evaluates the community in which the witch's victim lives and, through a process of elimination, selects the witch. She does not make her choice known for fear of frightening the victim or his parents, as has been mentioned, and also because she feels that if her accusations are made public, it would only cause further dissension among the Comanche people. She feels that there is enough tension among the Comanches without adding accusations of witchcraft.

The Contemporary Situation

This chapter has dealt with Sanapia's treatment of a victim who has been witched by the magical insertion of the malevolent essence of an eagle plume. Sanapia doctors also among the Wind River Shoshone; southern Cheyenne, southern and northern Arapaho, Kiowa, Kiowa-Apache, Ponca, Creek, and Fort Sill Apache, as well as the Comanche; and thus she has confronted cases of witchcraft other than the variety which has been described in this chapter. Her general approach to a cure, however, is similar in all cases. She feels that the body of the victim has been put out of balance by some tangible or intangible entity; therefore, to correct the abnormal condition, she works to remove that which is causing this physiological disequilibrium.

Given the antagonistic feelings between the northern and southern Comanches and the fact that patterns of witchcraft exist, it would seem that there would be a high rate of intergroup witchcraft, at least being directed by the northerners. This does not appear to be the case, a major reason being that the southerners generally do not respond. They consider witches and witchcraft merely superstitious beliefs, or, at best, nonexistent in modern times. A further possible explanation of this lack of intergroup witchcraft is the special distribution of the Comanche bands—the more traditionally oriented bands cluster in the north and northwest of the Comanche area while the more fully acculturated band members are found in the south and southwest. There may be as many as 40 miles separating members of these two groups. Therefore, there is no necessary for daily social interaction between members of the opposing "tribes," which could reduce the generalized hostilities to more intense and socially unsettling personal conflict, thus better facilitating the desire and the opportunity for the execution of witchcraft.

Witchcraft among contemporary Comanches is mainly intergenerational. Older men and women, feeling their life power fading, turn to malevolent magic in an attempt to augment their failing social prestige and to defend themselves against the more vital younger generation. The few cases of witchcraft which I was able to investigate among the Comanches followed this general pattern of essentially intergenerational jealousy and tension. This was also the basic

Conclusion

Lack of Comparable Material

- 121 MANY OF THE PROBLEMS in evaluating the material presented in this
book stem from the fact that there is little Comanche information
114 with which to compare it. The information contained in Kardiner's
(1945) discussion of Comanche culture is based on data supplied largely by
Ralph Linton which he gathered with the Santa Fe group in 1933. Wallace and
Hoebel's (1952) book is almost totally based on material obtained in 1933 by
this same group. Therefore, practically all that is known of Comanche ethnography
121 is based on the circumstances of several months in 1933. A further problem is
756 that Sanapia, in her role as eagle doctor, is unique in contemporary Comanche
society. There is no one with whom to compare her. This also means that there
124 is no way to check the information which Sanapia supplied, except so far as
it was the type which could be verified by other Comanches. Consistency in her
responses to the same questions asked at various times and her desire that this
study act as the "book of her Medicine way" are the only indications which can
be suggested to support the high probability of her veracity in materials which
could not be otherwise checked.

Inconsistencies

- 128 The inconsistencies between data presented by Sanapia and the materials
presented by the authors who have written on Comanche notions of power, magic,
and religion have been noted in the body of the text. Since any conclusions
based on these differences would necessarily be spurious, I will not introduce
[756] them again in conclusion. It is enough to say that Sanapia's interpretation of her
relation to the supernatural is consistent to her and to other Comanches. It would
be futile and improper to discuss whether she is "right" or whether Wallace,
Hoebel, and Kardiner are "right."

31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 NO6 Comanche NO6
Oklahoma

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Sanapia, 1969.

The pervasive influence of acculturation is a fact which cannot be skirted, 177 however, and perhaps it is at the core of the inconsistencies between Sanapia and the ethnographers of the early 1930s. Sanapia is particularly immediately affected by the changes wrought by acculturation and change because of the nature of her role. The notion of her "place" in Comanche society, plus the rigidly bound manner 756 159 177 554 in which her behavior is directed by certain supernatural sanctions, forces her to react to change piecemeal. A Comanche not so bound as Sanapia to certain pre-

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159 scribed modes of behavior and thought can ebb and flow with the stimuli of
756 acculturation. He can bend, withdraw, aggress, and withdraw again, while retain-
177 ing a homogeneous and integrated self-concept. Sanapia, however, is relatively
554 rigid and must react immediately lest her role structure be shattered.

Sanapia Prevails

159 To Sanapia, she is an eagle doctor first and foremost. Her whole life is
756 bound in this role; therefore, its protection is extremely dear to her. Sanapia
177 lives with compromise, rationalization, and intellectualization. Because of her
[157] functionalistic and pragmatic temperament, she must defend an institution which
to her at times has little meaning in its particulars. Each new realization of
acculturative changes stimulates her to attempt to fit this newly acquired realization
into a nonantagonistic relationship to her role as Medicine woman. She knows that
she must meet the threats of culture change directly if her institution is to con-
tinue to have meaning for Comanches who are reacting to acculturation.

In this manner she has incorporated elements and sentiments of Christian-
ity and organized peyotism into her own religious structure in an attempt at
compatibility with the religious atmosphere of her life situation. By accepting
the basic tenets of Christianity and organized peyotism, she has also provided
herself with further sources of supernatural powers. Sanapia has defined illness
into "white" and "Indian" categories, thereby retaining her position in the overall
medical structure of both cultures. She has borrowed words and concepts from
the mass media to elaborate her views of certain aspects of physiology, health,
and medicine. These are but a few examples. Sanapia, while anchoring her senti-
ments and loyalties in a traditional Comanche setting, has extended herself, through
her concern with her profession, into the white culture.

Perhaps the most significant points this study has illustrated are the
psychotherapeutic function which Sanapia possesses in contemporary Comanche
culture and the psychological function of ghost sickness. Although it cannot be
775 absolutely substantiated, it would appear that ghost sickness, in its present form,
753 is a new arrival in Comanche society. Ghost sickness can be considered, in most
177 cases, a conversion reaction whose negative emotional basis is founded in the
cultural and personal confusion and tension produced by the increasingly effi-
cient success of acculturation in corroding the traditional basis of Comanche
159 society. It then appears that Sanapia is the curer of a dynamic and functional
756 human disorder. She is not a specialist in the treatment of broken bones or gun-
177 shot wounds like a buffalo doctor, nor of rattlesnake bites, like a snake doctor; she
is the curer of an illness which is psychodynamic in nature. As her people change,
ghost sickness will no doubt change, and Sanapia and successive eagle doctors'
interpretation of ghost sickness will also change. Sanapia treats the individual
rather than a specific static human affliction; she is essentially a native psychiatrist.
This dynamic flexibility has enable Comanche eagle doctors to exist long after
the other varieties of Comanche native doctors have had their function usurped
by white doctors during the ongoing process of acculturation.